United Nations

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Official Records • Fifty-first Session
Supplement No. 12 (A/51/12)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. In the absence of massive new refugee influxes on the scale experienced in recent years, the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) throughout 1995 and the first quarter of 1996 was characterized by the consolidation of programmes and mechanisms launched in response to previous large-scale emergencies, the pursuit and implementation of solutions and, where circumstances permit, the elaboration of preventive strategies. The prospect of a large-scale repatriation to the former Yugoslavia emerged near the end of 1995 as a distinct possibility, while in the Great Lakes region of Africa plans for a comprehensive voluntary repatriation faltered in the face of external constraints. In the States of the former Soviet Union, the High Commissioner consolidated the foundations of a wide-ranging strategy designed to address existing and potential population displacements.

2. UNHCR continued to implement its distinctive international protection mandate, which involves promoting, safeguarding and developing principles of refugee protection, strengthening international commitments, and promoting durable solutions, be they in the form of voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement.

3. At the end of 1995, the population of concern to the Office worldwide stood at some 24 million, of which 14.2 million, or some 60 percent, were refugees. Internally displaced persons (3.2 million), others of humanitarian concern (3.5 million) and returnees (2.8 million) made up the balance. Overall, the number fell by some 3.5 million in the course of 1995. In large part, this reduction occurred in the internally displaced and returnee categories.

4. A durable solution to the plight of the 2 million Bosnian refugees and displaced persons appeared within reach following the signing of the Dayton peace agreement in late 1995. UNHCR presented its operational plan for durable solutions to the problems of displacement in the former Yugoslavia in March 1996, in which it elaborated the conditions required for repatriation and the principles that should govern the return of refugees and displaced persons. In the Great Lakes region of Africa, host to some 2 million refugees since 1994, durable solutions proved more elusive. Nonetheless, by the end of 1995, nearly a quarter of a million "new caseload" Rwandans had opted to repatriate. In Southeast Asia, the winding up of the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees, which is due to terminate in June 1996, marked the closing of a chapter on an asylum-seeker situation that originated in the 1970s.

5. A dual preoccupation with solutions and prevention has been the impetus behind efforts to develop a comprehensive approach to the problems of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and migrants in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and relevant neighbouring States. Preparatory meetings have paved the way for the anticipated adoption of a plan of action at a ministerial-level regional conference to be held at Geneva on 30 and 31 May 1996.

6. UNHCR has given particular attention to the coordination of its activities with other United Nations agencies, notably within the context of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 of 28 July 1995 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations. A wide-ranging consideration of the resolution by the UNHCR Executive Committee has been structured around solutions, prevention and emergency response. UNHCR

also participates actively in parallel inter-agency consultations under the aegis of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. The Department has been invited to address on a regular basis inter-sessional meetings of the UNHCR Executive Committee on the progress made in the inter-agency consultations as well as in discussions held in the governing bodies of other agencies concerned by the Economic and Social Council resolution.

7. In attempting to achieve a better interface between relief, rehabilitation and development, UNHCR has continued to reinforce its community-based approach to reintegration assistance and has endeavoured to bolster its partnerships with other United Nations agencies, notably the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The signing in March 1996 of a global Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and UNICEF was a significant step in this direction. The Office pursued substantial discussions with other departments and agencies, notably the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP and the World Bank, on how to bridge more effectively the institutional gaps in the continuum from relief to development. Discussions were initiated with several financial institutions on reinforcing mutual interests in post-conflict reconstruction.

8. The Office has continued to give special emphasis to policy issues identified as priority areas by the Executive Committee and the Economic and Social Council. The special needs of refugee women and children, as well as environmental issues raised by the large-scale presence of refugees in countries of asylum, are now better integrated into UNHCR planning and reporting.

9. In 1995, UNHCR received a total of $1.3 billion in voluntary contributions towards its General and Special Programmes. By 31 March 1996, a total of $229 million had been received against General and Special Programmes requirements amounting to an estimated $1.4 billion.

CHAPTER II

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

A. Introduction

10. The primary functions of UNHCR include providing international protection to refugees and seeking permanent solutions to their problems. The legal basis for these functions is provided in the Statute of the Office (General Assembly resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950, annex). The activities of the Office are further reinforced and guided by subsequent General Assembly resolutions and the conclusions and decisions of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme.

11. In fulfilling the mandate entrusted to it by the international community, UNHCR traditionally has promoted ratification of relevant international instruments and incorporation by States of those instruments into national legislation; sought to secure admission of refugees and asylum-seekers, and to protect them against refoulement; and ensured that the authorities of countries of asylum took necessary measures to safeguard their physical well-being, as well as their treatment, in accordance with international protection standards. Contemporary developments have allowed and indeed encouraged UNHCR to enhance its cooperation with other actors in developing and implementing policies to protect the human rights of all people who actually or potentially lack national protection, including by encouraging the development of comprehensive and regional approaches to situations that may or do compel people to flee; as well as in promoting conditions that would make voluntary repatriation of refugees possible.

12. Since the present High Commissioner assumed her position in 1991, 24 States have acceded or succeeded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol, or both, making a total of 131 states parties to one or both of these instruments. A total of 41 States are parties to the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa; and the majority of Latin American States adhere to the principles of the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees and the 1994 San José Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons.

B. The content of international protection today

13. While refugee numbers worldwide continue to show a slight decline, concern remains about the real, potential and perceived burden of protecting and assisting refugees. These concerns have caused some Governments to deny entry to asylum-seekers or forcibly return thousands of refugees to their countries of origin; other Governments constrict entitlement to basic rights for various groups of victims of internal conflict, and yet others attempt to streamline procedures in ways that preclude fair appeals before deportation.

14. These and other developments present UNHCR with serious difficulties in undertaking its protection and assistance activities. They also underscore the need to strengthen the institution of asylum and to continue to seek lasting solutions. Nonetheless, many Governments continue to uphold asylum as an indispensable instrument for the international protection of refugees, and demonstrate commitment to receive and host refugees in cooperation with UNHCR.

15. The note on international protection, 1/ submitted to the Executive Committee at its forty-sixth session, in October 1995, emphasized two themes: extending international protection to all who require it in situations of mass outflows, especially from conflict; and alleviating the burden placed on many developing countries by mass influxes of refugees. The note also included a number of considerations that UNHCR regards as central to fortifying the international protection system. Among these are the need to develop constructive regional standards based on a liberal interpretation of the international refugee instruments, and to avoid restrictive legal interpretations, especially those arising more out of concerns about illegal immigration than refugee movements.

16. At its forty-sixth session, the Executive Committee called on States to promote conditions conducive to the return of refugees and to support their sustainable reintegration by providing countries of origin with rehabilitation and development assistance. 2/ It also called on States to manifest their international solidarity and burden-sharing with countries of asylum, particularly those with limited resources. The Executive Committee reiterated its support for the role of UNHCR in exploring the development of guiding principles to ensure international protection to all who need it, and called on the Office to organize informal consultations on the subject. UNHCR is currently engaged in such consultations.

17. The Executive Committee also adopted a conclusion on the prevention and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons. 3/ Stressing that the prevention and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons are important in the prevention of potential refugee situations, the Executive Committee acknowledged its responsibilities for stateless refugees and the reduction of statelessness already entrusted to the High Commissioner, and encouraged UNHCR to continue its activities on behalf of stateless persons. In particular, the Executive Committee requested UNHCR actively to promote accessions to the statelessness conventions. UNHCR has also played a more active role in regional discussions aimed at resolving certain nationality issues.

18. An important aspect of the current challenge to provide protection to all who need it and to prevent and resolve refugee flows relates to the involvement of UNHCR within countries of origin. The activities of the Office in countries of origin include returnee monitoring and, under certain conditions, protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, as well as activities that can help prevent new refugee flows.

19. At its forty-sixth session, the Executive Committee recognized that in order to address some of the causes of refugee movements, an effective human rights regime was essential, including institutions that sustain the rule of law, justice and accountability. To that end, the Executive Committee called on the Office to strengthen its activities in support of national legal and judicial capacity-building. 4/ Consistent with this, and where appropriate, UNHCR has helped to build national legal, judicial and administrative capacity. In some countries, where resources and conditions permit, UNHCR has helped train judges and prosecutors to further assure the rights of returnees and other displaced persons. Such activities aim at preventing population displacement by developing and consolidating legal frameworks that secure the basic rights of people in their place of residence, including the right to remain, as well as strengthening the system of refugee protection.

20. As part of an effort to mobilize support for regional preventive action, UNHCR is organizing, in collaboration with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a regional conference to address the problems of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, and other forms of involuntary displacement in the Commonwealth of Independent States and relevant neighbouring States. The Conference aims at developing a concerted, comprehensive strategy to prevent involuntary population movements and at addressing the consequences of displacement within the region. It also aims at promoting and disseminating information concerning humanitarian principles in the region.

21. Since 1992, UNHCR has given guidance on the temporary protection of persons in need of international protection as a result of human rights abuses or conflict in the former Yugoslavia, some of whom would not be protected under the application of the 1951 Convention. On the assumption that the need for protection would not be protracted, UNHCR called on Governments to admit and to care for those in need. Governments responded positively to this appeal and, in many cases, provided the refugees concerned with a more permanent status and thereby greater security, while the situation in the former Yugoslavia remained unresolved.

22. UNHCR has been designated within the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the agency responsible for planning and implementing the repatriation of the many Bosnians who can now contemplate return. In pursuance of this, UNHCR has developed criteria for determining when there is no longer a presumptive and general need for international protection. A key benchmark is the establishment and functioning of institutions that will uphold and secure the human rights standards enshrined in the Constitution.

23. The protection responsibilities of UNHCR include securing the human rights of refugees, returnees and other displaced persons of concern to the Office. Addressing the fifty-second session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, at Geneva, on 20 March 1996, the High Commissioner concentrated on the repatriation of refugees and the return of internally displaced persons. She stressed the central place that respect for human rights must have in the process of post-conflict peace-building, in all its aspects, including a well-structured division of labour among the various international actors concerned with these issues in post-conflict situations. In cooperating with the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, UNHCR will be guided by the principles of complementariness and comparative advantage, while respecting differences in mandates and approaches. These principles have proved useful in organizing refugee and human rights operations within the framework of overall United Nations operations, such as those in Cambodia and El Salvador, and are being further tested in the repatriation planning and post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

24. UNHCR has continued to promote an active focus on the protection needs of refugee women and children. The Office convened a symposium on gender-based persecution in February 1996, at which 16 Governments with some experience of gender-based claims were represented. This was in follow-up of the Executive Committee's call to support and promote efforts by States towards the development and implementation of criteria and guidelines on responses to persecution specifically aimed at women, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women. The meeting sought to highlight the nature of persecution from which women refugees may flee, in particular persecution that occurs within the society, the family, or in the sphere of reproductive health. To ensure that women refugees are recognized and

protected without discrimination, extensive efforts are still needed to promote and disseminate standards and information in respect of both procedural aspects of interviewing female asylum-seekers and the substantive issues of evaluating gender-based persecution. UNHCR is drawing on the experience of countries that have taken the lead in drawing up guidelines on gender-based persecution.

25. A Memorandum of Understanding signed in March 1996 between UNHCR and UNICEF defines the beneficiary populations (refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and affected local populations) covered by the two agencies. It also covers advocacy, promotion and strategy-formulation roles, particularly with regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as operational, reintegration and rehabilitation activities.

26. UNHCR has long sought to dissuade Governments from arbitrarily detaining refugees and asylum-seekers. The use of detention as a means of dealing with asylum-seekers is, in the view of UNHCR, inherently undesirable. This is especially so in the case of vulnerable groups such as single women, children, unaccompanied minors and those with special medical or psychological needs. Freedom from arbitrary detention is a fundamental human right, and the use of detention for administrative purposes is, in many instances, contrary to norms and principles of international law. UNHCR has been concerned at the apparent increase in detention practices in many parts of the world. Building on Executive Committee conclusion No. 44 (XXXVII) and on numerous international norms and standards, UNHCR issued Guidelines on Detention of Asylum-Seekers, which declare as a general rule that asylum-seekers should not be detained, describe the situations in which detention can be employed and elaborate on the admissible duration and conditions of detention.

C. Promotional activities

27. During the reporting period, Namibia acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and South Africa and Antigua and Barbuda acceded to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, bringing the number of States parties to one or both instruments to 131.

28. The Office's promotional activities sought to strengthen knowledge and understanding of refugee issues, as well as to foster the effective implementation of international legal standards on behalf of refugees, returnees and other persons of concern to UNHCR, including through their incorporation into national legislation and administrative procedures. To this end, the Office organized refugee law and protection courses for government officials, implementing partners and other non-governmental organizations in all regions of the world.

29. During 1995, UNHCR was increasingly involved in the work of the human rights treaty bodies and other human rights mechanisms through sharing of information, exchange of views and promotion of human rights standards in refugee and returnee contexts. The Office stepped up collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, especially at the level of field operations. A memorandum was signed in 1995 between the UNHCR Branch Office in Rwanda and the Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda, in an effort to enhance complementarity of action in the monitoring and institution-building areas. Ongoing contacts with human rights working groups, rapporteurs, experts and monitors are also an integral part of the approach of UNHCR to link human rights concerns with the protection of refugees.

30. The UNHCR Centre for Documentation and Research acts as the information resource arm of the Office. It provides users with a broad and relevant collection of refugee literature and legal and country of origin information. In order to ensure access to information on refugees, the Centre has developed 14 databases, known collectively as REFWORLD, which include country reports and United Nations documentation in full text, case law, instruments, legislation, media reports and an on-line thesaurus. REFWORLD is now available on the Internet and has just appeared as a CD-ROM.

CHAPTER III

ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

A. Major trends in assistance

1. General and Special Programmes

31. UNHCR assistance activities are undertaken through two broad programme categories: General Programmes (including a Programme Reserve, a Voluntary Repatriation Fund and an Emergency Fund) and Special Programmes. Obligations entered into during 1995 under General Programmes amounted to $405.1 million. With regard to Special Programmes (which include programmes covered by United Nations consolidated inter-agency appeals), obligations in 1995 reached $737.9 million. Of the Special Programmes expenditure, 31.7 per cent pertained to the UNHCR programme of humanitarian assistance in the former Yugoslavia and a further 31.8 per cent to the Burundi/Rwanda emergency operation. Other important expenditures concerned the Mozambique repatriation programme and the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees. Thus, total voluntary funds obligations related to 1995 activities amounted to $1.14 billion. In addition, expenditures under the United Nations regular budget amounted to $27.9 million. Detailed information on expenditure levels for each country or area programme is given in table 1.

32. The initial 1996 General Programmes target approved by the Executive Committee in October 1995 stood at $445.3 million (including the provisions for the Programme Reserve, the Voluntary Repatriation Fund and the Emergency Fund). Projections for 1996 under Special Programmes, as at 1 March 1996, amount to $930.6 million, of which some $288.4 million pertain to the Burundi/Rwanda operation and some $348.3 million to the former Yugoslavia.

33. In 1995, at the request of the Executive Committee, 5/ a series of informal consultations on budgetary questions was held, in which the nature and relationship of General and Special Programmes was reviewed. The question of governance over these programmes was also considered. The conclusions of these consultations were endorsed by the Executive Committee at its 1995 annual session in a decision on budget structure and governance. 6/

34. In its decision on budget structure, the Executive Committee reaffirmed that the main criterion for the inclusion of activities under General Programmes was that they qualified as statutory; in addition, they should be activities related to situations that have stabilized. It was recognized, however, that for a range of reasons, in particular funding considerations, it was not always possible to include all the activities that met these criteria under General Programmes. The Executive Committee reaffirmed that the activities under General Programmes were a funding priority. The criteria governing the Programme Reserve, the Voluntary Repatriation Fund and the Emergency Fund were also reviewed. Provisions were approved for the use, under certain conditions, of the Programme Reserve and the Voluntary Repatriation Fund, respectively, for refugee situations and voluntary repatriation operations for refugees that were being funded, for various reasons, under Special Programmes; the extension of such funding to these activities was a recognition of their statutory nature. The levels of the Programme Reserve, the Voluntary Repatriation Fund and the Emergency Fund were also reviewed. The level of the Emergency Fund was maintained at $25 million. As to the Voluntary Repatriation Fund, it was decided that its level should have a base of $20 million and may extend up to an

amount equivalent to 10 per cent of the total budgetary estimates for voluntary repatriation for the previous year; for 1996, the Voluntary Repatriation Fund stands at $20 million. For the Programme Reserve, it was decided that this would be constituted between 10 and 15 per cent of programmed activities under General Programmes; for 1996, the Programme Reserve stands at $42.9 million (representing 12 per cent of programmed activities).

2. Types of assistance

(a) Emergency preparedness, response and assistance

35. During 1995, UNHCR continued its consolidation of the wide range of emergency preparedness and response arrangements that have been developed since 1991. The major deployment in 1995 of a range of these resources was to the Russian Federation - Daghestan, North Ossetia and Ingushetia - in response to the crisis in Chechnya.

36. The focal point of the UNHCR emergency preparedness and response capacity is its Emergency Preparedness and Response Section. Over the past year, the five UNHCR Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers were deployed to various locations, not only for emergency response (Daghestan/North Ossetia, Guinea, Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda), but also for operations planning missions (Mali, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Zaire), needs assessment missions (Egypt and Russian Federation) and inter-agency coordination activities (Rwanda and Sri Lanka). The Emergency Preparedness and Response Section also seeks to assure administrative capacity in emergencies. In the past year, a new group of UNHCR Emergency Finance and Administrative Assistants was trained and deployed to Daghestan/North Ossetia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Myanmar, Togo, Rwanda and Zaire.

37. Human resource stand-by rosters, both internal and external to UNHCR, are another component of the emergency preparedness and response arrangements. The internal UNHCR emergency response team roster is now a well-established feature of the Office's stand-by capacity. A roster is established and is valid for a period of six months, and at any time comprises some 30 experienced UNHCR staff. The UNHCR internal roster is complemented by external rosters; such rosters have been established with the Norwegian and Danish Refugee Councils, United Nations Volunteers and Rädda Barnen. In 1995, UNHCR entered into a new emergency stand-by agreement with Red R (Australia), whereby that agency would provide up to 20 engineers for emergency deployment. In the first year under this arrangement, which is fully funded by the Government of Australia, 13 engineers were deployed to the Russian Federation, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen and Zaire.

38. As a result of the lessons learned in Ngara, United Republic of Tanzania, during the emergency in 1994 in the Great Lakes region of Africa, it was felt that there was a need to address the question of staff housing for emergency teams in locations devoid of suitable local housing. A new staff and office accommodation package has been developed. Each package (there are currently two packages) provides living accommodation for 25 persons and office accommodation for 40 staff.

39. During 1995, particular attention was paid by the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section to contingency planning; Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers were involved in contingency planning exercises in the Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

Sri Lanka, Egypt, Jordan, Rwanda and Zaire. During these exercises, the "inter-agency process approach" to contingency planning was pursued and facilitated by UNHCR. The planning was undertaken collectively and on an ongoing basis by United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and, where feasible, government agencies. In many cases, the planning was organized by UNHCR in close cooperation with WFP, with whom the Section liaises on a regular basis to identify and prioritize among regions or countries where contingency planning is desirable. On the basis of these experiences, guidelines on contingency planning are being developed. UNHCR has been asked by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in the context of the Complex Emergency Training Initiative (CETI), to help ensure that the above-mentioned approach to contingency planning and the related guidelines are reflected in a United Nations standard for contingency planning.

40. Two other related initiatives to enhance emergency stand-by capacity and deployment are the development of a database of non-governmental organization emergency capacity, and of government service packages. Over the past year, UNHCR, working in close coordination with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, has made considerable progress in the development of the government service package concept. Multilateral meetings were held with Governments on 3 April and 13 June 1995, followed by bilateral technical discussions between UNHCR and Governments, in order to arrive at the agreed specifications for priority self-contained packages for exceptional emergency response. These discussions culminated in a multilateral meeting on 20 and 21 March 1996 with Governments, directly concerned United Nations agencies and representatives of non-governmental organizations. In the course of these discussions, the focus moved to a broader range of pre-specified response mechanisms, only some of which reflected the original concept and involved military assets. None of these mechanisms is necessarily specific to refugee emergencies, and discussions are continuing with the Department to ensure a standardized approach and central register of all such mechanisms. The second initiative relates to the traditional response resources provided by non-governmental organizations in refugee emergencies. To better gauge and use this response capacity, UNHCR, following a meeting with non-governmental organizations in October 1995, has begun work on the establishment of a database; 30 key non-governmental organizations are feeding into this database.

41. Total expenditure in 1995 on emergency assistance amounted to $41.3 million, of which $16 million was under General Programmes and $25.3 million under Special Programmes.

(b) Care and maintenance

42. After the emergency phase of a refugee operation, the basic needs of the refugee population are covered by activities described as care and maintenance. During 1995, $241.8 million, or some 60 per cent of UNHCR General Programmes expenditures, was in the form of care and maintenance assistance. An additional $454.4 million was expended for care and maintenance assistance under Special Programmes. In 1995, expenditure on care and maintenance under all sources of funds amounted to $696.2 million; this was some 60 per cent of the total expenditure of UNHCR.

(c) Voluntary repatriation

43. Voluntary repatriation is regarded by UNHCR as the preferred durable solution to refugee situations. Negotiations and events under way in many parts of the world provide continued grounds for hope that voluntary repatriation can

become a reality for a large number of the world's refugees. During 1995, more than 800,000 persons were repatriated to their countries of origin, some 450,000 of whom with UNHCR assistance, most notably to Afghanistan (170,000), Rwanda (110,000) and Myanmar (61,000). During 1995, $191.9 million was spent on voluntary repatriation under all sources of funds, the bulk being under Special Programmes ($171.7 million).

44. In its deliberations over the past year, the Executive Committee has continued to focus on UNHCR activities in countries of origin, especially on the conditions necessary to ensure that voluntary repatriation is truly a durable solution to the plight of refugees. Most recently, the Standing Committee, in considering Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56, looked at the question of the Office's protection role and assistance activities in countries of origin. 7/ An overview of specific voluntary repatriation operations planned or in progress 8/ was also considered by the Standing Committee at its April 1996 meeting.

(d) Local settlement

45. This type of assistance, where possible takes the form of projects aimed at promoting the socio-economic self-reliance and local integration of refugees in asylum countries, thus enabling UNHCR to phase out its care and maintenance assistance on a gradual basis. Such projects, for the most part, fall into two broad categories, namely, agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Total expenditure on local settlement projects in 1995 amounted to $126.4 million.

(e) Resettlement

46. Further to the main conclusions of a review of resettlement policies and practices, UNHCR initiated a consultative process in order to establish a regular dialogue with major resettlement Governments and agencies. An informal working group on resettlement meets every two months and there are occasional regional meetings of non-governmental organization resettlement agencies. A more formal meeting, with representatives from the respective capitals, was held at Geneva in October 1995 and a second formal consultation with Governments and non-governmental organizations will be held in June 1996.

47. UNHCR estimated that, in 1995, it would need to refer some 32,000 refugees for resettlement. An additional 15,000 persons from the former Yugoslavia were considered to be in need of resettlement. UNHCR welcomed the special programmes undertaken by some Governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to resettle women at risk and refugees with medical problems and other handicaps.

48. Almost 10,000 refugees from the former Yugoslavia were resettled under UNHCR auspices. Some countries were reluctant to participate in the operation; others did so on the condition that the refugees would benefit from temporary protection. Since the Dayton peace agreement, the number of candidates for resettlement has dropped.

49. Two thirds of the resettlement caseload elsewhere, a total of 21,000 persons, actually departed to third countries. The majority of cases still considered in need of resettlement originate from the Middle East and Africa. It is estimated that a further 32,000 resettlement places will be needed in 1996.

50. Guided by decisions of the Executive Committee and recommendations made during the 1994 review of resettlement, UNHCR is taking steps to strengthen its capacity in developing criteria and managing implementation of resettlement. In addition to enhancing the consultative process in 1996, UNHCR will, for example, issue a Handbook for Resettlement and reinforce its programme for the training of resettlement staff together with government and non-governmental organization partners.

B. Programme themes and priorities

1. Refugee women

51. UNHCR participated actively in the preparatory meetings and the Fourth World Conference on Women, in close cooperation with Governments and non-governmental organizations, in order to ensure that the concerns of refugee women were reflected in the Platform for Action. A network of focal points in UNHCR field offices ensured that refugee women themselves were part of this process. On the occasion of the Conference, a publication highlighting many examples of field operationalization of the UNHCR policy and guidelines on refugee women was released, as was a new film on refugee women. The strong recommendations in the Beijing Platform for Action related to human rights, violence against women, and women in conflict situations reflected this advocacy; these concerns are also the basis of a UNHCR framework for action in the coming year, as well as the contribution of UNHCR to the related United Nations system-wide medium-term plan.

52. To strengthen field implementation of existing policies and guidelines on refugee women, three regional refugee women coordinator posts have been staffed, and a fourth post is foreseen for the second half of 1996. The UNHCR field focal points originally established for the Beijing Conference preparations have been reinforced. A reference group chaired by the Deputy High Commissioner has been established to support field implementation by UNHCR of the Beijing Platform for Action; the immediate focus of its work has been women's access to, and participation in, the distribution of food.

53. The UNHCR training programme for gender issues, People-Oriented Planning (POP), has continued to expand its stand-alone courses, while concurrently integrating aspects of the training into other training courses. A case study on reproductive health and a training video were recently added to the training materials. Independent replication of the training by non-governmental organizations has increased, demonstrating the relevance of the training to their own operations. Moreover, a network of UNHCR POP trainers has been formalized, thus creating yet another strong source of support for the implementation of gender policies.

54. A symposium on gender-based persecution, aimed at highlighting the specific situation of female asylum-seekers, was convened at Geneva in early 1996, with the participation of 16 Governments (see para. 24 above). UNHCR has also developed a human rights awareness training module targeted at refugee women.

2. Refugee children

55. A Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and UNICEF was signed on 14 March 1996. It is aimed at further strengthening collaboration and coordination between the two agencies and is designed to promote coordinated

responses in areas of joint concern (see para. 25 above). Specific operational activities covered by the Memorandum include: contingency planning; assessment and monitoring; support for unaccompanied children; promotion of psycho-social well-being; support to families and children; basic education; health activities; and water and sanitation.

56. To strengthen the response to the needs of unaccompanied children in emergencies, tools for an emergency kit and a priority actions handbook are being developed jointly by UNICEF and UNHCR within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two agencies. A particular operational focus on the needs of refugee children remains the Rwanda-Burundi emergency. By 1 January 1996, more than 28,000 children in the Great Lakes region had been reunited with their families, but some 78,000 children remained classified as unaccompanied. In response to General Assembly resolution 49/172 of 23 December 1994, a report on assistance to unaccompanied refugee minors was submitted to the General Assembly (A/50/555). It describes, inter alia, policies, inter-agency collaboration, persistent protection problems and some lessons learned in the area of addressing the needs of unaccompanied refugee children.

57. A paper on the implementation of the Office's Policy and Guidelines on Refugee Children 9/ was submitted to the Executive Committee in October 1995. UNHCR continues to pursue its objectives with regard to refugee children in close coordination with the rest of the United Nations system and other interested bodies. The Office participates actively in the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child by providing information to the Committee concerning the situation of refugee children and by disseminating its recommendations to relevant field offices to strengthen their implementation. UNHCR is also actively supporting and participating in the United Nations study on the impact of armed conflict on children to ensure that the refugee and displaced children perspective is well reflected in the study.

3. Environment

58. A new policy on the environment was adopted by the Executive Committee at its forty-sixth session, in 1995. It aims to reflect environmental concerns in a more comprehensive manner throughout the refugee assistance operations of UNHCR. The policy has four basic principles: to assure an integrated approach; to prevent rather than cure; to be cost-effective and ensure overall benefit maximization; and to involve the refugee and local populations. To give effect to this policy, new overall environmental guidelines have been developed, and the related sectoral guidelines are being revised.

59. In field operations, greater emphasis is now placed on the sustainable use of natural resources around refugee camps. Some of the environmental measures being introduced include the promotion of controlled tree harvesting, the establishment of nurseries, the replanting of deforested areas and the creation of protected areas. In addition, to reduce the pressure on the surrounding environment, measures are being taken to reduce firewood consumption. These include the introduction of fuel-efficient stoves, the provision of alternative energy sources such as kerosene, peat and agricultural residues, and the distribution of food in forms that do not require extended cooking times.

60. To promote the above-mentioned new environmental policy, a number of further initiatives are being introduced. These include, among others, model projects to promote environmental education and training and participatory

approaches to environmental problems, an environmental database and environmentally sound technologies. Efforts are also being made to promote further cooperation with other international organizations. Examples include the recent UNDP/UNHCR Great Lakes initiative to address degradation of infrastructure and the environment in refugee-affected areas within the United Republic of Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire, and an international symposium organized by UNHCR, IOM and the Refugee Policy Group in April 1996 on the impact of environmental factors on displacement, and its impact, in turn, on the environment.

4. Refugee/returnee aid and development

61. As Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 underlined, there is a growing recognition of the need for humanitarian and development actors to ensure closer linkages in their activities. For UNHCR, the need for such linkages is clear. Of particular concern are voluntary repatriation operations, and especially those that involve the reintegration of refugees into communities that have experienced extensive destruction of social and productive infrastructures as a result of civil war and communal conflicts.

62. Humanitarian and development actors have to confront these challenges together, and work together in those asylum countries where scarce resources and socio-economic structures are strained by the presence of refugees. UNHCR has direct experience of the critical importance of ensuring that the humanitarian and development modes of assistance are indeed mutually supportive and reinforcing. This is most obvious when opportunities present themselves for refugees to return and rebuild their shattered communities. Invariably, peace after fratricidal communal strife is frail and in need of sustained support. The short-term rehabilitation assistance provided by UNHCR to facilitate the social and economic reintegration of the returning refugees needs to be anchored within a broader recovery and reconstruction strategy that ensures a continuity from initial recovery to sustainable development.

63. UNHCR, therefore, has been reinforcing its operational linkages with agencies and partners that have the competence and capacity to address the impact of refugee influxes on the development resources of asylum countries, as well as the multifaceted needs of the countries into which refugees are reintegrating. In 1995, UNHCR continued its efforts to integrate its humanitarian efforts in a development framework. In Mozambique, where the Office's repatriation and reintegration programme will come to an end in 1996, important lessons have been learned from efforts to interface with UNDP and other development actors. Jointly with UNDP, UNHCR has agreed on a framework for inter-agency initiatives to promote a smooth transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable human development. Both the new Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and UNICEF and a revision to the 1994 Memorandum of Understanding with WFP, now under discussion, place particular emphasis on the need to further develop linkages in operations involving the reintegration of refugees in situations of post-conflict recovery. Consultations with the World Bank and the regional development banks have also continued, with particular attention given to post-conflict reconstruction. The High Commissioner has called for more flexible and predictable aid for post-conflict recovery, which could help bridge the gap between relief and development and address the need to resolve and prevent communal conflicts and ensuing disintegration of societies.

C. Programme management and implementation

1. General

64. In a decision of the Executive Committee at its forty-sixth session, 10/ the High Commissioner was requested to initiate a process of informal technical consultations on the question of overhead costs for non-governmental implementing partners, particularly headquarters costs. Four consultative meetings were held between December 1995 and March 1996, which resulted in a proposed modification and clarification of the UNHCR policy on non-governmental organization overhead costs. An interim revised policy was adopted by the Standing Committee of the Executive Committee at its April 1996 meeting.

65. The UNHCR Asset Management System, introduced in 1994, is aimed at increasing the capability of each field office to improve the control of assets purchased by UNHCR for its own use and that of implementing partners. The System should be fully implemented in the first half of 1996.

66. In 1995, as part of a move to improve the formulation and delivery of training, the responsibility for budget administration and management of training activities was transferred to the relevant units at headquarters. As to programme management training in particular, UNHCR provides training to its staff on topics such as the programme management system, needs assessment, project design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, working with implementing partners, and the role of programme and field support staff. Emphasis is increasingly placed on courses with a country-specific component, and this type of training is being adapted for UNHCR implementing partners.

67. In the past year, UNHCR has made further progress in the implementation of its project dealing with the registration of refugees. Two regional UNHCR registration workshops, with WFP staff participation, were held (at Nairobi and at Dakar); staff were trained in registration strategies, techniques and software.

68. In October 1995, UNHCR embarked on a wide-ranging review of its methods of operation in order to improve delivery, accountability and performance and to build the capacity to contract and expand in response to operational demands. This undertaking, named Project Delphi, employs both internal and external "change management" expertise. After a close examination of UNHCR processes, a first report with proposed options for change will be delivered to the High Commissioner in the first quarter of 1996.

2. Manuals and guidelines

69. A programme and project management handbook for UNHCR implementing partners, entitled "Partnership", was finalized in March 1996. Revised guidelines on educational assistance to refugees were issued in June 1995; these incorporate policies developed in response to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and building on the UNHCR Policy and Guidelines on Refugee Children. In addition, an inter-agency field manual, entitled Reproductive Health in Refugee Situations was recently published (Geneva 1995). This manual is an outcome of the Inter-Agency Symposium on Reproductive Health in Refugee Situations, organized in June 1995 by UNHCR and UNFPA, in collaboration with UNICEF and WHO and with the active participation of some 50 governmental and non-governmental institutions. UNHCR is also preparing guidelines on commodity distribution; these guidelines reflect the outcome of a regional workshop held

in October 1995 with the participation of WFP and non-governmental organizations.

3. Evaluation

70. During the past year the evaluation function in UNHCR has undergone important changes. With the creation of a combined inspection and evaluation service, additional resources are now engaged in carrying out comprehensive reviews of country operations. The inspections undertaken by UNHCR now examine a much greater number of country operations, as well as many aspects of management not previously covered by the evaluations. During the past year, inspections have been carried out in 28 countries, thus significantly increasing the Office's internal oversight.

71. At the same time, the recent period of rapid change in UNHCR has confronted the organization with a range of new operational challenges that require analysis and review. As a consequence, UNHCR has been increasingly called upon to evaluate and analyse innovative operational policies and a variety of management and programme issues.

72. To focus evaluation on areas where it will have the greatest impact, UNHCR has carried out or initiated the planning of evaluations that take into account its overall management strategy. These evaluation efforts can be grouped under the four broad management priorities: protection and solutions, cooperation and coordination, implementation of policy and guidelines, and staff welfare activities. Through careful planning and targeting, UNHCR has attempted to provide its managers with the independent and objective evaluations they have come to rely upon, as well as credible inspections, which have provided the High Commissioner with a new management and problem-solving tool.

D. Regional developments in Africa

73. In 1995, Africa hosted some 8.8 million persons of concern to the Office, of which 5.5 million were refugees. Some 2 million refugees in the Great Lakes region continued to weigh heavily on the countries of asylum and to challenge the efforts of UNHCR to effect durable solutions to their plight. In the Horn of Africa, solutions for some populations were consolidated, while in West Africa, immediate prospects for the voluntary repatriation of more than 750,000 Liberian refugees dimmed in the face of recent developments. UNHCR expenditure in Africa in 1995 stood at $482.6 million, or some 42 per cent of the total UNHCR expenditure.

1. Great Lakes region

74. There are currently 1,684,640 Rwandan refugees in Zaire, the United Republic of Tanzania and Burundi. In addition, 208,000 Burundian refugees are in Zaire and the United Republic of Tanzania. After two years of emergency relief assistance, the situation in the camps in the Great Lakes region of Africa has stabilized. The size of the refugee population - nearly 2 million persons - and the situation prevailing in the refugee-affected areas does not allow long-term settlement of the refugees, and voluntary repatriation is regarded as the only feasible solution. In the countries of asylum (Burundi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire), UNHCR is providing essential basic

relief assistance to the refugees as well as some assistance to the host population.

75. As part of its efforts to facilitate voluntary repatriation and reintegrations the Office is also active in Rwanda, where the key component of reintegration activities is the construction of shelter, principally for refugees who had fled prior to the April 1994 events. UNHCR is also implementing a number of quick impact projects in the water, health, education and community services sectors in the areas of return in Rwanda. In addition to the monitoring of returnees, and the implementation of a mass information campaign, UNHCR is working closely with the Rwandan judiciary and the police to improve standards.

76. In Burundi, pacification missions undertaken by the President and various ministers to all parts of the country have had limited results. Armed conflicts have continued, mainly in rural areas, provoking new outflows of refugees into Zaire and the United Republic of Tanzania, and within Burundi. The deteriorating security situation in Burundi at the end of 1995 led some 30,000 Rwandan refugees and Burundian asylum-seekers to flee to the United Republic of Tanzania, while 1,000 Burundians were arriving every month in Zaire. In January 1996, at the request of the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner travelled to Burundi to review operations and the security situation of humanitarian personnel. As a result of her recommendations, a joint security committee, in which the Government as well as the United Nations and the non-governmental organization community are represented, has been established.

77. The major asylum countries in the Great Lakes region have repeatedly expressed concern at the prolonged stay of the refugees. On 31 March 1995, following an exodus of Rwandan refugees towards the United Republic of Tanzania, the Tanzanian Government, invoking national security, closed its borders. In August 1995, Zaire returned some 16,000 refugees in one week. Subsequently, the High Commissioner visited the region as a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and it was agreed with the Zairian authorities that any repatriation would be on a voluntary basis but that return movements had to be accelerated. The rate of return throughout the region has been slow.

78. From January 1995 to March 1996, more than 280,000 refugees repatriated to Rwanda, 122,357 of whom had fled as a result of the April 1994 events. During the reporting period, the overall monthly rate of return from the various countries of asylum stood at an average of 14,000 persons.

79. Following the OAU/UNHCR-sponsored Conference held at Bujumbura in February 1995, two follow-up meetings on the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted at the Conference have taken place. The first of these, in Addis Ababa on 26 May 1995, noted the positive steps that had been taken by the parties involved in the voluntary repatriation, but observed that much remained to be done if large repatriation movements were to take place. On 29 February 1996, a second meeting was convened to focus more precisely on obstacles to repatriation. It established a better understanding of conditions in Rwanda and the measures UNHCR had so far taken to promote repatriation. A consensus was reached on the need to accelerate voluntary repatriation.

80. The tripartite commissions on repatriation involving Rwanda, UNHCR and the United Republic of Tanzania or Burundi have met regularly. Two meetings at the ministerial level involving Zaire, Rwanda and UNHCR were held at Geneva in September and December 1995. Discussions at the commission meetings have focused on ways of enhancing repatriation through mass information campaigns,

separation of intimidators from refugees and cross-border visits. At the time of reporting, major obstacles to the large-scale repatriation of Rwandan refugees remained, including continuing intimidation in camps in Zaire, the United Republic of Tanzania and Burundi, increased tensions and insecurity in the border region, and the lack of a comprehensive political solution. The continuing deterioration of the situation in Burundi was an additional cause of grave concern.

81. On 18 and 19 November 1995, the Carter Foundation convened in Cairo a summit of heads of State of the countries of the Great Lakes region. It was attended by the Presidents of Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zaire and a representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, and a declaration was adopted outlining measures to accelerate repatriation of refugees to Rwanda and to enhance the peace process in the region. On 18 March 1996, a follow-up summit meeting was convened at Tunis to review progress in the implementation of the Cairo declaration and to discuss the conflict in Burundi.

82. Pursuant to the recommendation contained in the Bujumbura plan of action, UNDP and UNHCR organized a consultative meeting of donors and countries hosting refugees, held at Geneva on 24 January 1996, on assistance to areas adversely affected by large numbers of refugees. A $70.5 million short-term assistance package was presented to help repair damage to the environment and infrastructure. The international community's response has so far been limited.

2. Central Africa

83. There are about 27,000 Sudanese refugees in the Central African Republic and 111,870 in Haut-Zaire, of whom 91,545 are receiving assistance from UNHCR. Of the 18,560 Ugandan refugees settled in northern Zaire, 15,560 are receiving assistance from UNHCR. The Angolan refugee population in Zaire is estimated at 160,950 persons, of whom 41,950 are receiving UNHCR assistance.

84. With the exception of refugees settled in northern Zaire on fertile agricultural land, the prospects for self-sufficiency in the subregion are limited. Care and maintenance activities are being pursued for most refugees until conditions in their countries of origin become conducive to return.

3. West Africa

85. Although some spontaneous returns to Liberia have been noted following the signing of the Abuja peace accord in August 1995, there are still about 750,000 Liberian refugees, mostly in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, and recent incidents have prompted renewed outflows.

86. After the signing of the Abuja peace agreement, some progress was made towards achieving peace in Liberia. This progress has, however, suffered from setbacks since December 1995 following skirmishes involving the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) monitoring group (ECOMOG) and some factions. Meetings sponsored by ECOWAS to put the peace process back on track were repeatedly postponed owing to the reluctance of some faction leaders to renew dialogue. At the time of writing, the renewed outbreak of major inter-factional fighting has dealt a serious blow to the prospects for peace.

87. Incursions of fighters of Liberian warring factions into neighbouring countries have resulted in loss of lives and property, seriously straining

relations between local and refugee populations. At December 1995, there were an estimated 120,000 refugees in Liberia, mainly from Sierra Leone.

88. During the period under review, the number of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea and Liberia increased significantly owing to the ongoing civil war in Sierra Leone, making for a total of 360,000 Sierra Leonean refugees.

89. Recent positive political developments in Sierra Leone that fostered hope for a resolution of the country's civil conflict have been set back by events in Liberia. Representatives of the Government and the Revolutionary United Front have been engaged in peace negotiations. The first was held in Côte d'Ivoire in late February 1996. Furthermore, elections took place as scheduled and a new civilian President was elected. It had been expected that this development would trigger preparatory activities for an organized repatriation in 1996 of some 360,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in the subregion, mainly from Guinea and Liberia.

90. The situation in Togo has virtually returned to normal, leading to a significant increase in the number of spontaneous and assisted returns from Benin and Ghana, the two main asylum countries.

91. With the improvement of the situation in their country of origin, the number of Togolese refugees in Benin and Ghana has declined significantly. A total of 20,983 persons repatriated from Benin under a pilot project in 1995, and it is expected that more than 70,000 individuals will return in 1996.

92. It is estimated that, given the improvement of the security situation in northern Mali, a sizeable number of Tuaregs have spontaneously returned to their country in 1995. About 100,000 Malians still reside in Algeria, the Niger, Burkina Faso and Mauritania.

93. The number of Mauritanian refugees in Senegal stands at 66,000 and has not significantly changed over the reporting period.

94. Assistance programmes in the subregion are mainly of a care and maintenance nature. Recent joint WFP/UNHCR missions, which also included donors, have decided on the gradual reduction of food assistance to Liberian, Sierra Leonean and Mauritanian refugees and a shift to targeted feeding, as progress has been made towards achieving relative self-sufficiency. On the other hand, assistance in the agriculture and income-generation sectors has been increased, and health and sanitation assistance structures reinforced.

95. In February 1996, before the resurgence of major fighting in Liberia in April, a $60 million appeal was launched for the repatriation and reintegration of Liberian refugees. The plan of operation for the repatriation and reintegration of 50,000 Togolese from Ghana, 20,000 from Benin and 500 from other countries is being translated into an appeal document. Similarly, an appeal for funds to organize the repatriation of 90,000 Malian Tuaregs from Burkina Faso, the Niger, Algeria and Mauritania is being finalized. Should the security situation improve in Sierra Leone following the installation of a newly elected civilian Government, UNHCR will initiate the repatriation of some 360,000 Sierra Leonean refugees residing in neighbouring countries.

4. East Africa and the Horn of Africa

96. UNHCR activities in the subregion focused mainly on care and maintenance for refugees from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan. In Uganda, however, as in northern Zaire, the Government's generous policy of land allocation to refugees, mainly from the Sudan, has enabled a gradual phasing out of care and maintenance assistance and the establishment of local settlements. Although some limited organized returns have taken place during the reporting period, there has been a net influx of southern Sudanese refugees mainly to Uganda, northern Zaire, Kenya, the Central African Republic and Ethiopia.

97. Besides assistance to refugees to enhance their skills so as to accelerate the process of rapid reintegration upon their return to their places of origin and some limited resettlement to third countries, UNHCR has increasingly been involved in organized repatriation. The pilot phase of the Programme for Refugee Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Resettlement Areas in Eritrea (PROFERI) was concluded successfully in June 1995 with the repatriation of 24,235 Eritreans. Owing to unforeseen circumstances, the first phase of the Programme, which envisaged the return and reintegration of 100,000 Eritreans, has not yet started. More than 19,000 Ethiopians have been repatriated from the Sudan since December 1995. The movement has temporarily been stopped, although registration has resumed.

98. In Eritrea, UNHCR, along with the Eritrean Commissioner for Refugees, is formulating and implementing a series of quick impact projects that are designed to assist both local and returnee communities.

99. Tensions between the Sudan and some of its neighbouring countries have had a negative impact on ongoing repatriation operations. Visiting the Sudan in March 1996, the Deputy High Commissioner received assurances that the Government would facilitate the voluntary repatriation of both Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees.

100. Since Eritrea gained independence in May 1991, about 150,000 individuals have returned to their home country, 24,235 of whom returned through the pilot repatriation project that was successfully completed in early June 1995.

101. Starting on 15 December 1995, more than 19,000 Ethiopian refugees were repatriated by UNHCR from the Sudan, while an estimated 52,000 are still in the Sudan. The preparations for the airlift to repatriate 3,000 Ethiopian refugees from Kenya, who have registered and received clearance from the Government of Ethiopia, have reached the final stage and the operation is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 1996. As at 31 December 1995, 32,000 Ethiopian refugees had repatriated from Djibouti under UNHCR auspices. As a result, the total refugee population remaining in Djibouti stood at 25,000, of which 22,000 are Somalis and 3,000 Ethiopians.

102. The number of Somali refugees stands at 126,060 in Kenya and 275,190 in Ethiopia. Over the reporting period, the cross-border operation allowed the return of 45,000 Somalis from Kenya. Although the security situation in Somalia remains fragile, it has been decided, following two high-level United Nations inter-agency and UNHCR missions, to conduct a pilot repatriation of 10,000 Somalis from Ethiopia to north-western Somalia in 1996.

103. On 20 and 21 March, a series of meetings of the Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD) were held at Nairobi. Besides representatives of Kenya, the meetings were attended by delegations from Uganda,

the Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Djibouti. The meetings stressed the urgent need to peacefully resolve existing differences and the importance of peace as a prerequisite for development. It is believed that IGADD is the most appropriate forum to deal, at the regional level, with the issue of refugees and population displacement in the subregion.

5. Southern Africa

104. By late 1995, more than 1.7 million Mozambican refugees had returned home from six countries of asylum and UNHCR-assisted repatriation came to a successful completion.

105. UNHCR assistance in Mozambique focused on the reintegration of returnees and other targeted populations in priority areas by improving food security, road access, water and sanitation, and primary health care. These activities are being implemented through some 750 quick impact projects that are expected to be completed by June 1996.

106. In Malawi, which until recently hosted more than 1 million Mozambican refugees, some of the assets used by the implementing partners in the Mozambican refugee programme were handed over to the host Government in April 1995. UNHCR continues to provide post-repatriation assistance in the sectors of forestry, water and health.

107. In preparation for the UNHCR phase-out from Mozambique, a framework for inter-agency initiatives to promote a smooth transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable human development was established by UNHCR and UNDP. This process is geared towards the identification of key development concerns in affected areas that have received initial reintegration assistance.

108. Following the signing of the Lusaka Protocol on 20 November 1994 between the Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), UNHCR prepared and launched a repatriation and reintegration operation for some 311,000 Angolan refugees over a period of 30 months, from June 1995 to December 1997. In June 1995, UNHCR launched an appeal to meet budgetary requirements for this period.

109. While delays in the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol have set back the repatriation plans, the recent encampment and demobilization of 16,000 UNITA fighters gives reason to hope that the organized repatriation could start by June/July 1996.

110. Since the launching of the UNHCR appeal in June 1995, some 15,000 Angolan refugees have returned spontaneously to their places of origin. It is estimated that about 300,000 Angolans are still in refuge in Zaire, the Congo and Zambia.

111. UNHCR continues to cooperate closely with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in areas of mutual concern, such as population movements in the region. To this end, a memorandum of understanding, outlining the responsibilities of both organizations as well as areas of cooperation, is being finalized. Most recently, UNHCR participated in an SADC conference on social development, held in Swaziland from 25 to 28 March 1996 which sought to strengthen social development activities, including assistance to refugees, in the subregion.

E. Regional developments in the Americas and the Caribbean

112. Three developments had an impact on UNHCR work in the Americas and the Caribbean during 1995 and the first three months of 1996. First, the election in Guatemala of a President favourable to reform has given the peace process the needed impetus and could enhance the repatriation process for the 12,000 Guatemalan refugees in Mexico, which had slowed down at the end of 1995 owing to increased violence against returnees. Secondly, the decision of the Government of Mexico to allow Guatemalan refugees to stay in Mexico on a permanent basis has settled the question of finding a durable solution for Guatemalan refugees in Mexico. Finally, the continuing arrival of extra-continental asylum-seekers to countries in Latin America has prompted UNHCR to monitor the situation closely to ensure that asylum principles continue to be upheld. Expenditure in the region in 1995 totalled $34.9 million. The refugee population stood at just under 1 million.

1. North America

113. In the United States of America, two proposed immigration bills, one in the House of Representatives and the other in the Senate, were in the process of being amended and finalized. UNHCR has expressed a number of concerns about provisions of these bills that are likely to undermine protection principles.

114. There are proposals to sign into law a memorandum of agreement between Canada and the United States on cooperation in examination of refugee claims from nationals of third countries. UNHCR has been consulted by both Governments throughout the drafting process, and has given its views, citing both the positive elements and its concerns.

2. Central America and Mexico

115. In the wake of a decade of liberal asylum policy, highlighted in 1994 by an international colloquium to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration, and by the finalization of the International Conference on Central American Refugees, UNHCR regional strategy now emphasizes the prevention of future refugee flows.

116. As durable solutions have been found for the majority of Central American refugees, the thrust of UNHCR activities in Central America (to a lesser degree in Guatemala) is now on the legal issues related to returnees and local integration, and on international protection. The Office's role is now to strengthen the capacity of Governments to deal with refugee-related matters and, as a means of prevention, to strengthen regional human rights institutions and to play a catalytic role in ensuring that development-oriented projects are also targeted at areas with major concentrations of persons of concern to UNHCR.

117. Durable solutions continue to be consolidated in Central America. In Belize, the quick impact project programme will continue through 1996 at a reduced level, and is aimed at facilitating the socio-economic integration of 8,100 refugees and undocumented persons in refugee-like situations. In El Salvador, the quick impact project programme, which has facilitated the integration of approximately 31,500 Salvadoran returnees, was completed in April 1995. Furthermore, UNHCR continues with voluntary repatriation of individual cases, and the legal integration of refugees who have opted to remain in their country of asylum.

118. Some 9,500 Guatemalan refugees repatriated from Mexico during 1995 despite continuing security problems, particularly the Xaman massacre of 11 returnees, the scarcity of land available to returnees, and the absence of a peace agreement. The number of returnees in 1995 was the highest since collective returns were initiated in 1993. The cumulative total of Guatemalan returnees assisted by UNHCR, through quick impact projects and other assistance, since January 1993 is now more than 20,000.

119. The human rights accord between the Government of Guatemala and the armed opposition, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union, which is a party to the general peace agreement, has not yet yielded positive results in improving security. However, the process continues and an agreement on indigenous rights was signed during 1995. The election of a President who favours reform has increased the possibility of reaching a final peace agreement by the end of 1996, which would enhance the return process. However, the possibility of local integration in Mexico and the volatile security situation in Guatemala affect the numbers wishing to repatriate.

120. The assistance programme in the Mexican States of Campeche and Quintana Roo has successfully increased the productivity of refugee settlements through joint programmes of credit and output-oriented on-the-job training, helping refugees become self-supporting. During 1995, improvements to the settlements in these two States continued and the transfer of responsibilities for infrastructure and services to the Mexican authorities was initiated. In 1996, while UNHCR will contribute to some major repairs, the daily running of operations will increasingly be handled by the refugees themselves and by the Mexican authorities.

121. The Government of Mexico announced in the last months of 1995 its intention to allow the local integration of those refugees not wishing to repatriate. Following the issuance of immigration documents, the majority of the refugees in Chiapas are expected to relocate to Campeche and Quintana Roo. Existing settlements there will be consolidated and, if need be, new settlements will be established. It is noteworthy that 50 per cent of the Guatemalan refugee population is composed of children born in Mexico who, by constitutional right, are considered Mexican nationals.

3. South America and the Caribbean

122. Positive political developments in the Caribbean, particularly in Haiti, permitted UNHCR to proceed with voluntary repatriation activities without interruption. By the end of 1995, 1,121 refugees had been repatriated. While a residual caseload of 937 Haitian refugees remains in the Dominican Republic, it is expected that the majority will repatriate during 1996. Meanwhile, discussions continue between UNHCR and the Government of the Dominican Republic in order to find durable solutions for those who do not choose to return.

123. The arrival of extra-continental asylum-seekers has increased significantly in South America and the Caribbean. During 1994, 13 per cent of asylum-seekers were extra-continental, while during 1995 such cases represented 80 per cent of asylum-seekers. A similar tendency has been evident in other parts of the Latin American region, and this trend is expected to continue.

124. While UNHCR continued to encourage voluntary repatriation as the preferred durable solution in the subregion, local integration support was also maintained.

F. Regional developments in Asia and Oceania

125. Solutions in Asia and Oceania were consolidated with the voluntary repatriation of 62,000 Myanmar refugees from Bangladesh and the planned conclusion of the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees. A continuing stalemate in the search for a solution for Bhutanese asylum-seekers and refugees in Nepal and major new internal displacement in Sri Lanka were causes of concern. The total number of refugees in the region as at 31 December stood at some 0.8 million. Total expenditure in the region in 1995 stood at $95.8 million.

1. South Asia

126. From January 1995 to March 1996, nearly 62,000 Myanmar Muslim refugees repatriated voluntarily from Bangladesh to Rakhine State in Myanmar. More than 142,000 persons have returned since organized voluntary repatriation commenced in April 1994. Some 50,000 persons remaining in five camps in Bangladesh are expected to repatriate during 1996. Returnee families receive repatriation kits comprising basic domestic necessities in addition to an individual cash grant, housing subsidy, and two-month food ration. Returnee communities benefit from more than 1,000 small-scale projects funded by UNHCR and implemented by village development committees. WFP implements a comprehensive food-for-work scheme aimed at improving access roads and establishing small ponds to support village-level aquaculture. WHO and UNICEF, together with several local and international non-governmental organizations, also implement programmes in health care, water and sanitation, education, rural infrastructure, and income-generating activities, which cover 80 per cent of the 142 village tracts constituting the area of return. UNHCR has unimpeded access to all returnees for the purpose of monitoring their well-being and socio-economic integration. UNHCR will phase down its operational activities in Rakhine State by July 1997 and is working to ensure that longer-term sustainable assistance will be provided by appropriate United Nations and other development agencies.

127. The registered mainly Afghan urban refugee population in Delhi, India, decreased slightly during the reporting period from 23,000 to 21,000 persons, of whom about 50 per cent receive UNHCR assistance. In the first quarter of 1995, following the cessation of hostilities between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in January 1995, some 10,000 Sri Lankan refugees voluntarily repatriated under UNHCR auspices from the Indian State of Tamil Nadu. To facilitate their integration, returnee communities in the five northern Sri Lankan districts of Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu benefited from micro-projects that focused on education, road rehabilitation, water and sanitation, and income-generation support. Some 52,000 refugees remain in camps in India and a further 40,000 reportedly reside outside camps. Further repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees from India was hampered by the resumption of hostilities in April 1995, which escalated further in October 1995 precipitating the internal displacement of more than 350,000 persons from the Jaffna peninsula. In December 1995, at the request of the Government of Sri Lanka, UNHCR assisted in the transportation of non-food relief for up to 150,000 displaced persons in the Vanni region. In January 1996, a UNHCR field office was opened at Kilinochchi to monitor the situation of recently displaced populations.

128. Durable solutions have not been found for more than 89,000 Bhutanese asylum-seekers and refugees in Nepal, notwithstanding six rounds of bilateral talks between the concerned Governments since 1994.

2. East and South-East Asia

129. The focus of UNHCR in Cambodia during 1995 continued to be on the monitoring of vulnerable returnees who remain marginally integrated owing to continuing insecurity and limited income potential. In addition to assisting 20,300 vulnerable returnees, UNHCR has contributed, along with other United Nations and non-governmental organizations, to the relief needs of more than 113,000 internally displaced persons. A total of 145 Cambodian refugees voluntarily returned to their country of origin with UNHCR assistance during 1995 and 370 Cambodians remain in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries of first asylum pending return approval. During the second half of 1995, UNHCR monitored the safe return of 1,859 Cambodians of Vietnamese origin who fled Cambodia before the May 1993 elections. They were able to return to their traditional areas of origin in Kompong Chhnang, Siem Reap and Pursat provinces. Beyond a limited continuation of assistance for new returnees, the primary focus of UNHCR in 1996 will be towards the more traditional role of advocacy and promotion of refugee law, the pursuit of durable solutions for refugees and persons of concern, and support for the promotion of human rights through close collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

130. The refugee population in China, as reported by the Government increased from 287,086 at the beginning of 1995 to 288,411 at the end of March 1996, comprising 286,900 Vietnamese, 1,452 Lao and 40 Cambodians. UNHCR assistance is focused primarily on local settlement for the majority of this caseload through support for revolving fund rural credit schemes. During the reporting period, 6 Cambodians and 59 Lao returned from China to their countries of origin.

131. At the end of 1995, 93,250 refugees from Myanmar were residing in 28 settlements within Thailand along the Myanmar border, comprising 75,940 Karen, 11,150 Mon and 6,160 Karenni. The settlements are located in Pra Chuab Kirikan, Kachanaburi, Tak and Mae Hong Son provinces. These groups, who share a similar ethnic background and kinship with the border populations in Thailand, continue to be assisted by the Government of Thailand and the Burmese Border Consortium, which is composed of five non-governmental organizations. During the first quarter of 1996, more than 2,500 Mon returned from Payaw camp in Thailand to resettlement sites within Mon State, Myanmar, following a ceasefire agreement between the Government of Myanmar and the New Mon State party. During the reporting period, UNHCR staff from Bangkok have undertaken missions to the border area to monitor the welfare of the refugees. UNHCR has requested that the concerned Governments grant increased access to refugees from Myanmar in Thailand and returnees in Myanmar in order to monitor their conditions of asylum and confirm the voluntariness and safety of their return.

3. Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees

132. As of 31 March 1996 more than 78,000 Vietnamese and 27,000 Lao had returned to their countries of origin from first asylum countries in Asia. Some 35,000 Vietnamese and 6,300 Lao remained in camps. This residual caseload includes 33,365 Vietnamese and 160 Lao who did not fulfil refugee criteria under the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) and are expected to return to their countries of origin. Voluntary repatriation of both Vietnamese non-refugees and Lao decreased dramatically in 1995, with only 5,600 Vietnamese and 2,500 Lao returns compared to 12,500 and 5,600, respectively, in 1994. The rate of return of both Vietnamese and Lao was adversely affected by developments in the first half of 1995, which generated false hopes of resettlement.

133. At its seventh and final meeting, at Geneva on 5 and 6 March 1996, the Steering Committee of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees agreed that the CPA would formally come to an end as of 30 June 1996. The Steering Committee reaffirmed that the only viable option for Vietnamese non-refugees was return to Viet Nam under voluntary repatriation or orderly return arrangements. UNHCR-sponsored care and maintenance and repatriation-related assistance for Vietnamese non-refugees in ASEAN asylum countries will be phased down as of 1 July 1996, with appropriate arrangements being made for Hong Kong. Regarding the Lao, the Steering Committee noted that concerned Governments were establishing arrangements to ensure the earliest possible solution for the remaining caseload in Thailand in 1996. It was agreed that UNHCR returnee reintegration assistance and monitoring activities in Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic would be continued. All allegations of mistreatment of returnees have been investigated by UNHCR and no cases of persecution have been found.

134. During the reporting period and throughout 1996, UNHCR will continue to provide individual Lao returnees with cash and rice allowances, and support the rehabilitation of returnee village communities. UNHCR, in collaboration with the Lao Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the European Commission and three international non-governmental organizations (Concern of Ireland, Consortium of the United States, and ZOA Refugee Care of the Netherlands) will continue to support the ongoing development of 29 rural resettlement sites in 12 provinces, benefiting some 10,000 returnees. Concerning returns to Viet Nam, UNHCR will continue to provide reintegration assistance in the form of cash grants, and returnee community rehabilitation support through the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs. During 1995, UNHCR supported the implementation of 109 community-based micro-projects valued at $2.5 million.

G. Regional developments in Europe

135. During 1995, priority programmes and concerns in Europe included institution-building and providing legal advice in Central and Eastern Europe, temporary local reintegration projects for the most needy of the 900,000 refugees and internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan, and limited assistance programmes in Armenia, Georgia, the north Caucasus, and Ukraine. Following the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNHCR has drafted a plan of action for the eventual return and reintegration of some 2 million persons. The refugee population in Europe in 1995, including persons benefiting from temporary protection, comprised some 3.4 million persons. Total expenditure in Europe during 1995 came to $291.9 million.

1. Central Europe

136. As part of an overall strategy in the region, UNHCR is actively involved in the legislative process in countries in Central Europe. Efforts continue to be centred on influencing legislation with a view to establishing fair and accessible procedures for determining refugee status. Following the adoption of new refugee legislation by Slovakia and the Czech Republic in 1995, the Romanian Senate adopted, in February 1996, draft refugee legislation that had been pending for more than four years. In Poland, discussions to amend the draft aliens law have reached the final parliamentary stage. The Polish authorities have extended considerable cooperation in adjusting the provision of the draft aliens law, which is now in accordance with UNHCR recommendations. In early 1996, the Czech Government introduced amendments to previously adopted

refugee legislation, an important element of which included the discontinuation of refugee status after a period of five years. The amendment brings the new legislation fully in line with the provisions of the 1951 Convention. UNHCR is holding discussions with the Czech authorities on this issue, as well as on the citizenship and nationality laws, the latter in collaboration with the Council of Europe and other international organizations. In cooperation with the States concerned, UNHCR is also actively involved in the monitoring of readmission agreements that have been signed with countries of the European Union and among Central European States.

137. Apart from its involvement in the legislative process, UNHCR activities are focusing on institution- and capacity-building, training and a limited assistance programme, in countries where national structures do not exist or assistance needs are not fully covered. As is the case in Eastern Europe, countries in this subregion are affected by large transit migratory movements where the distinction between migrants and genuine asylum-seekers is often blurred.

138. UNHCR endeavours to assist the refugee authorities in Central Europe by creating conditions conducive to integration. The lack of affordable housing for asylum-seekers and recognized refugees continues to be an obstacle to the rapid integration of refugees into the socio-economic structures of the host country. Moreover, for the limited number of refugees recognized in Central European countries, the lack of integration possibilities tends to encourage a forward movement to Western Europe. To address this problem, preliminary contacts are being made by UNHCR to solicit funds from the Council of Europe Social Development Fund and other relevant European institutions.

2. Eastern Europe

139. The Office has continued to advocate strategies that could pre-empt refugee-producing situations in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. It has actively provided assistance in developing institutional capacity to assist and seek solutions to displaced persons. Together with interested Governments and intergovernmental organizations, the Office has been engaged in a search for a comprehensive approach to the problems of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and other forms of involuntary displacement in the CIS and relevant neighbouring States in preparation for a regional conference. The process provides a forum to discuss issues related to irregular migratory movements in the CIS and to assess the scope and consequences in a non-political framework.

140. The conference, scheduled to be held at Geneva on 30 and 31 May 1996, is expected to endorse a plan of action, a comprehensive strategy providing a framework for follow-up activities aimed at managing migratory flows, as well as developing institutional capacity to prevent mass displacement. UNHCR will also submit a joint paper with IOM outlining a plan of future activities in the region. All 12 CIS countries, as well as other interested States and intergovernmental organizations, have participated in the process, holding two meetings of experts, two rounds of three subregional meetings and three meetings of a drafting committee. The conference document is expected to be finalized at the fourth meeting of the drafting committee, scheduled to be held at Minsk in early May, followed immediately by a preparatory conference.

141. In February 1996, UNHCR participated in a joint United Nations/donor needs assessment mission, to Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, organized by the

Department of Humanitarian Affairs, to review current strategies of United Nations and non-governmental organizations to address the needs of the refugee and displaced populations in the Caucasus. A wrap-up meeting was held at Tbilisi on 5 and 6 March 1996 with all participants in this joint assessment, together with non-governmental organizations and interested donor countries. The conclusions of this exercise will be used to formulate the 1996 inter-agency appeal for the Caucasus, to be launched in June.

142. In Armenia, UNHCR has limited its intervention to the most vulnerable among a population of 150,000 refugees. In October 1995, Armenia adopted a citizenship law that gives access to Armenian citizenship for refugees of Armenian ethnic origin. Given this favourable legislation, in 1996 UNHCR is promoting and facilitating the local settlement of the refugees through the implementation of the citizenship law and activities leading to social and economic integration.

143. In Azerbaijan, the objectives set for the Office's 1996 programme are to facilitate the temporary local integration of the most needy among some 900,000 internally displaced persons and refugees, and to promote their economic self-reliance, pending the result of ongoing peace negotiations that may open the way for durable solutions in their favour.

144. In the absence of noticeable progress between the Abkhaz and Georgian parties over the issue of organized voluntary return of 200,000 internally displaced persons, the Office's 1996 objectives will be to reduce the dependence of the internally displaced population on external assistance, to strengthen the Government's capacity to service this population and to initiate confidence-building measures to benefit the 35,000 persons who have spontaneously returned to their areas of origin in the Gali district of the Abkhaz region.

145. While UNHCR envisaged phasing out its emergency operation in the north Caucasus for the displaced population from Chechnya (Russian Federation) at the end of 1995, new developments generated an additional influx of displaced persons into the neighbouring autonomous republics. In January 1996, UNHCR responded positively to a request from the Government of the Russian Federation to continue humanitarian activities in 1996 for the displaced population from Chechnya. In this connection, an updated inter-agency appeal will be addressed by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to the international community, integrating the Office's requirements for the continuation of its activities related to this ongoing crisis.

146. Following a request from the Government of Ukraine, a fact-finding mission was undertaken in February 1996. The mission team observed that about 60,000 Crimean Tatars are currently stateless and/or in a refugee-like situation. This may justify UNHCR involvement, the scope and nature of which is still to be defined. In addition, it should be noted that the Ukrainian authorities have recently started to implement, with active UNHCR support, procedures for determining refugee status, which have benefited a group of asylum-seekers. Throughout 1996, UNHCR will continue to support the governmental institutions concerned with refugee/asylum-seeker issues.

147. The main objectives of UNHCR in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova are to provide legal assistance to the Governments to facilitate accession to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, to finalize their refugee-related legislation and to establish concrete procedures, both for registration and refugee status determination. The determination of groups of concern and elaboration of specific support programmes is also envisaged.

148. In Turkey, the Office's long-term objective is to help the Government set up a satisfactory refugee status determination procedure that will take into account the diverse origins of the asylum-seekers arriving in the country. Pending further progress in this respect, UNHCR will continue to provide care and maintenance to asylum-seekers accommodated in reception centres run by the Government and awaiting examination of their claim, and will continue resettling UNHCR-recognized refugees. In addition, Bosnians living in Kirklareli camp and in Istanbul will receive UNHCR assistance.

3. Western Europe

149. The downward trend in numbers of asylum requests continued in 1995, with some 264,000 persons applying for asylum in Western Europe, compared to 299,000 in 1994. The decrease in numbers could be attributed to the implementation of more restrictive measures by States to curb immigration as a whole. Visa requirements, accelerated procedures, safe third country and safe country of origin concepts are examples of these measures. In addition to the decrease in numbers of asylum applications, the number of asylum-seekers granted refugee status under the 1951 Convention and those allowed to remain on special humanitarian grounds or under temporary protection declined. However, the Convention recognition rate increased from some 11 per cent in 1994 to some 16 per cent in 1995. One dilemma faced by Western European States is how to discourage and limit the abuse of the asylum channel while at the same time ensuring that those genuinely in need of international protection receive it and are not returned to situations in which their lives may be in danger.

150. The signing, in December 1995, of the peace agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina has raised the question of the discontinuation of temporary protection for asylum-seekers from the former Yugoslavia in Europe and given rise to the prospect of large-scale return.

151. Following the convening of the last of a series of meetings of the humanitarian issues working group within the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia on 16 January 1996, UNHCR has, in consultation with the parties involved, drafted a plan of operations for an early, peaceful, orderly and phased return and repatriation to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The plan includes provisions relating to the lifting of temporary protection once certain conditions, described as benchmarks, have been fulfilled. The Office's Operational Plan for Durable Solutions within the Framework of Annex 7 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Related Regional Return and Repatriation Movements was formally presented by UNHCR to a high-level working meeting held at Oslo on 8 March 1996. In order to ensure an adequate UNHCR presence in Western European countries where a large number of persons from the former Yugoslavia are situated, a provision was made under the special operation for the former Yugoslavia for the temporary assignment of liaison officers in 1996 in the regional offices at Brussels, Stockholm and Vienna and the branch office at Bonn.

152. UNHCR continues to engage in an informal dialogue with member States of the European Union (EU) on asylum and refugee matters. During 1995, discussions among EU member States intensified on the issue of the harmonization of article 1 A of the 1951 Geneva Convention, a subject that touches the heart of the UNHCR mandate. The final common position reached by States in November 1995 included a number of elements in line with the Office's interpretation. However, on the important issue of persecution by non-state agents, the EU position does not reflect the views communicated by the Office.

153. During the latter half of 1995, the EU Migration Group prepared a draft joint position paper on the situation of unaccompanied minors who have been abandoned in EU member States. The paper is on the agenda for discussion during the Italian presidency (January to June 1996). The draft text includes references to the repatriation of unaccompanied minors, basic standards of treatment and the EU response to arrivals of groups of minors. As yet, no provision for unaccompanied minor asylum-seekers is made in the text, an issue that UNHCR hopes will be considered. The issue of unaccompanied minors is also a priority issue on the agenda of the Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies; a report will be prepared to describe the different practices used in participating States.

4. Former Yugoslavia

154. With the implementation of the cessation of hostilities agreement signed on 1 January 1995 between the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serbs and the reopening of the routes across Sarajevo airport, humanitarian assistance traffic was restored. The agreement also made provision for increased freedom of movement for the people of Sarajevo, further exchanges of prisoners of war in line with the International Committee on the Red Cross (ICRC) plan, medical evacuations from Gorazde and freedom of residence.

155. Overall deliveries of aid supplies in Bosnia and Herzegovina were successful at the beginning of 1995, with UNHCR land convoys and the Sarajevo airlift maximizing supplies to create a contingency stock in anticipation of possible obstructions later in the year and bringing winterization items and fuel to Sarajevo and the eastern enclaves. Arrangements were made with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for the distribution of as many seed fertilizers and pesticides as feasible across Bosnia and Herzegovina before the onset of the planting season in March.

156. The subsequent worsening of the overall security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, following the failure of the warring parties to extend the cessation of hostilities agreement upon its expiry in April 1995, made movements extremely difficult, and UNHCR had to face increased levels of obstruction. Fighting expanded and more people were forced to flee their homes or were killed. The Office's ability to continue to provide assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina was deeply affected. Operations became almost completely blocked in Serb-held territories as well as in the enclaves, especially after airstrikes by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on 25 and 26 May 1995 and the resulting escalation of the conflict and the hostage crisis.

157. A sequence of serious incidents at Sarajevo airport led to the suspension of the humanitarian airlift on 8 April 1995; it was unable to resume until 16 September, more than five months later. Following the Dayton agreement, the operation has been discontinued as from the beginning of 1996.

158. Krajina Serbs and forces loyal to Bosnian rebel leader Fikret Abdic continued to obstruct the passage of UNHCR convoys to the Bihac pocket, with virtually all supplies blocked since May 1994. The humanitarian situation remained critical until the recapture of the Bihac pocket by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 7 August. This prompted the exodus of some 20,000 former inhabitants of Velika Kladusa and Cazin loyal to Abdic. They arrived in Croatia in appalling conditions. UNHCR, together with other humanitarian agencies, provided food and non-food assistance, shelter, water, sanitation and medical assistance. UNHCR was finally authorized to create a camp at Kuplensko,

and allowed to carry out a winterization operation. With the situation improving in Bihac, UNHCR started a programme of voluntary repatriation in conjunction with the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the time of writing, there were less than 6,000 refugees, soon to be transferred to Gasinci camp.

159. Throughout the year there was continued pressure placed on minority communities to leave the Banja Luka area, and the situation was further exacerbated by the influx of refugees from Western Slavonia. UNHCR protection officers closely monitored and attempted to remedy the situation through field trips and visits to the Croat and Muslim communities.

160. In May 1995 some 4,500 ethnic Serbs from Western Slavonia arrived in Sector East, while some 2,500 fled to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. They were accommodated in private houses and collective centres. UNHCR provided basic food and non-food items, especially to the elderly.

161. The fall of the eastern Muslim enclaves of Srebrenica, on 11 July 1995, and Zepa, on 25 July 1995, to the Bosnian Serb forces resulted in the forced exodus of 36,000 persons to the Tuzla and Zenica regions. UNHCR identified 11,000 places in collective centres around Tuzla. At the Tuzla airbase, UNHCR, in cooperation with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and a number of non-governmental organizations, assisted the new arrivals from Srebrenica. At the end of July, a host family agreement was signed between the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and UNHCR for limited assistance to 4,500 host families in the Tuzla region. After the fall of Zepa, UNHCR and UNPROFOR erected a transit camp in Zenica, where new arrivals were registered and assistance was distributed. Some 4,300 displaced persons were placed in collective centres - which were supplied with basic emergency items - as well as in host families. The capture by Croat forces of Glamoc and Grahovo in late July led to the flight of 14,000 Serbs to northern Bosnia. Many of them subsequently made their way to Banja Luka. UNHCR dispatched relief items, including food, plastic sheeting and sanitary materials, to assist the newly displaced persons.

162. In August 1995 the stocks of aid supplies UNHCR had prepositioned in Banja Luka were quickly exhausted with a mass influx of approximately 200,000 refugees from the Krajina, and additional quantities of food and non-food emergency supplies were brought in by land from Belgrade. UNHCR made fuel available to assist the refugees with their transportation needs as most gradually moved on towards Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). Way stations distributing aid were established along the road to Serbia. UNHCR then established an airlift to Belgrade to replenish stocks there. In addition, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made available to UNHCR two helicopters to transport relief supplies from Zagreb to Banja Luka.

163. A major concern was the situation of the remaining Serb population in the Krajina, most of whom were elderly and frail and lived in remote, isolated villages. Human rights violations, including burning and looting of abandoned property, harassment and brutal violence, were brought to the attention of the Government of Croatia at the highest levels on a number of occasions, together with serious criticism from the international community. The most vulnerable among the remaining Serbs were identified and assisted.

164. UNHCR supported the authorities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to cope with the massive influx of refugees from the Krajina. The Office distributed food and non-food items and fuel, together with emergency assistance. The massive influx of refugees had a substantial impact on the

UNHCR assistance programme in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, where the caseload more than doubled.

165. UNHCR followed closely the situation of the estimated 800 Muslims from Zepa and Srebrenica who were detained at Mitrovo Polje and Slivovica (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). In order to prevent any possible attempt to return them to the Bosnian Serb areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNHCR requested the authorities to consider them as refugees, and therefore under UNHCR protection, and expressed its complete availability to assist them in submitting their applications for resettlement to third countries. With the signature of the peace agreement and the new territorial configuration in Bosnia and Herzegovina, several resettlement cases were put on hold, in the hope that refugees would be able to return to their places of origin.

166. In the last months of 1995 the political and military situation improved dramatically. A ceasefire agreement came into effect among the warring parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 12 October and has been generally holding. This new situation resulted in an agreement between the Croat and Muslim sides for the return of displaced persons to contested areas in central Bosnia, as well as to Sector East in Croatia, and the signature of a basic agreement between Croat and Serb authorities from Sector East on 12 November. The agreement established a transitional period of 12 months and the conditions of security for the reintegration of the region under Croatian authority.

167. UNHCR paid repeated visits to Jajce, Travnik and Bugojno to monitor the progress in implementing the return of Bosnian Muslim and Croat families. While there were some returns of Croat families to Bugojno and Travnik, no Muslims were allowed to go back to Jajce and Stolac.

168. Following the signature in Dayton on 21 November 1995 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNHCR continued to act as the lead agency in the humanitarian field and, in accordance with annex 7 of the Agreement, was entrusted with the development and implementation, in close consultation with the parties, of a repatriation plan that would allow the orderly return of refugees and displaced persons.

169. Faced with an escalation of humanitarian needs in the former Yugoslavia, a supplement to the revised inter-agency appeal for the former Yugoslavia dated 31 May 1995 was issued on 15 September to respond to the considerable rise in internally displaced persons and refugees following events since May 1995. The revised inter-agency target was increased by $44.8 million from $470 million to $514.8 million. The UNHCR component of $206.4 million was increased to $222.7 million in December. A new United Nations consolidated inter-agency appeal for the former Yugoslavia was launched on 20 November, for $179.6 million to fund humanitarian assistance through the winter season to 3.3 million beneficiaries in the former Yugoslavia from January to April 1996. The UNHCR component was $70.9 million.

H. Regional developments in South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East

170. The South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East regions was host to some 4.6 million persons of concern to UNHCR, including 3.6 million refugees. UNHCR programmes focused on capacity- and institution-building, particularly in the five Central Asian republics. Some 348,000 Afghan refugees repatriated during 1995, and UNHCR presence in Afghanistan has been bolstered in the hope of

encouraging the repatriation of the remaining 2.1 million Afghans refugees in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In North Africa and the Middle East incremental progress was made in planning and implementing durable solutions for relatively stable caseloads. The total 1995 expenditure in the region amounted to some $106 million.

1. Central Asian Republics

171. Of the more than 500,000 Tajik internally displaced persons who were forced to leave their homes, mostly in the Khatlon region, during the 1992 civil war or ethnic conflict, approximately 95 per cent had returned to their places of origin by the end of 1995. Some 14,000 internally displaced persons remain in the Gorno-Badakhshan region. Some 43,000 Tajiks who fled to northern Afghanistan have also repatriated with UNHCR assistance, while 17,600 Tajik refugees remain in the Kunduz and Mazar-i-Sharif areas of Afghanistan.

172. With the return of the majority of Tajik internally displaced persons and refugees to their respective places of origin, UNHCR has completed the main objectives of its three-year operation in Tajikistan and phased down in the last quarter of 1995. Some UNHCR equipment and facilities were redeployed to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which has successfully taken over from UNHCR human rights monitoring in areas of return. Some 18,000 houses for Tajik returnees have been reconstructed in the Khatlon region, with shelter materials provided by UNHCR. Delivery of the last phase of construction materials for additional houses is under way. Other UNHCR material assistance programmes, i.e., quick impact projects and small enterprise development programmes, which have promoted social and economic conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation, have been handed over to UNDP.

173. In August/September 1995, UNHCR opened three liaison offices in Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan, thus establishing a UNHCR presence in all five Central Asian republics (the other two are Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). The primary UNHCR objective for the Central Asian Republics is to assist the Governments and operational partners in the creation of conditions for an efficient management of population movements through the proactive approach of capacity- and institution-building.

174. Since October 1995, a UNHCR judicial consultant has conducted in Tajikistan a series of in-country seminars for judges covering topics such as constitutional and criminal law, independence of the judiciary, court administrative methods, and relations of judges and prosecutors. UNHCR also started its assistance for the resettlement in Kazakstan of refugees of Kazak ethnic origin and the resettlement of those of Kyrgyz ethnic origin in Kyrgyzstan. Plans for 1996 activities in all Central Asian republics include the establishment of a regional centre for migration management, commissioning of research work on inter-ethnic relations, material support to government ministries and institutions of higher education, judicial assistance and a series of refugee and human rights law training seminars. UNHCR programmes in Central Asia will take into account the plan of action that is expected to be adopted at the CIS Conference (see para. 140 above).

2. South-West Asia

175. Despite the many known constraints confronting the Afghan operation, particularly those related to the continuing hostilities in Afghanistan,

voluntary repatriation continues to remain the preferred durable solution for the 2.1 million Afghans still reported to be in the neighbouring countries of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. During 1995, 348,000 refugees returned to Afghanistan, including 153,000 from Pakistan (of which 77,000 were assisted by UNHCR) and 195,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran (of which 92,000 were assisted by UNHCR). Inside Afghanistan, assistance activities in support of repatriation have increasingly shifted to communities in the country subsequent to the conclusion adopted by the Executive Committee at its forty-fifth session. 11/ A total of 386 quick impact projects have been implemented across Afghanistan by the five UNHCR sub-offices, the largest number being in the sectors of education, irrigation and transport. Delivery of the repatriation grant for returnees has been shifted from the point of departure in Quetta, Pakistan, to a central location in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar. A group-guaranteed lending programme for women in northern Afghanistan was initiated to increase the economic power of households through providing credit on easy and affordable terms. Additional credit programmes are under consideration in cooperation with the Grameen Bank/Trust.

176. Repatriation of Tajik refugees in northern Afghanistan was lower than projected during 1995, with 1,053 persons choosing to repatriate. This brings the total return since 1993 to 43,000 persons. There remain 7,300 refugees assisted in Sakhi camp (Mazar) and an estimated 11,500 scattered throughout Kunduz province. The programme will now consider options for local settlement of the remaining population.

177. As of February 1996, more than 864,000 registered Afghan refugees were reportedly in Pakistan. Parallel to the pursuit of voluntary repatriation, efforts have continued to pursue the rationalization of the assistance programme, with a view to further achieving optimal cost-effectiveness of available resources while maintaining assistance at a level commensurate with minimum requirements for sustenance. With the conclusion of the camp-based general food distribution in September 1995, the remaining assistance had been targeted primarily at community-based activities and vulnerable groups, while simultaneously building the refugees' capacity to attain self-reliance. In this respect, the strengthening of refugee management committees, which facilitated participation in the management of certain sectoral activities on a self-help basis, was an objective. The main activities of UNHCR have concentrated on health services, education and repatriation-oriented income-generation and skills and training.

178. During the reporting period, the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to host the largest refugee caseload in the world, with 1,420,000 Afghans and 585,000 Iraqis (Kurds and Arabs) residing in scattered areas throughout the country. Under the pressure of a difficult economic situation, the Government withdrew health and education subsidies during 1995, affecting both local and refugee populations, but more severely the vulnerable refugees. UNHCR has accordingly initiated a number of specific interim measures under the health and education sectors within the ongoing programme to minimize any adverse impact on the welfare of the refugees and their potential self-reliance.

179. Although voluntary repatriation is expected to continue to remain the most viable durable solution for the refugee populations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, it has now been increasingly recognized that other durable solutions may also have to be considered if the problems are to be satisfactorily and realistically resolved.

180. In early 1996, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran accordingly indicated its preparedness to initiate consultations with UNHCR with a view to seeking a comprehensive approach to the remaining refugees in the country. The overall direction of the UNHCR programme of assistance in the Islamic Republic of Iran will be guided, therefore, by policy decisions on how different durable solution options may be pursued and made available to the respective groups of refugees.

3. North Africa

181. In Algeria, the assistance programme for an estimated 50,000 refugees (28,000 from Mali and 22,000 from the Niger) who sought refuge in southern Algeria is being continued in 1996. The Algerian authorities have regrouped them in four centres located in the provinces of Adrar, Tamanrasset and Illizi. The prevailing situation in Algeria has so far only marginally affected the implementation of the assistance programme.

182. For Malians in Algeria, a repatriation pilot operation was initiated in 1995 as foreseen under the quadripartite (Algeria-Mali-IFAD-UNHCR) agreement signed at Bamako on 23 August 1994. The situation in northern Mali, however, delayed the implementation of mass organized repatriation. Spontaneous repatriation nonetheless was reported from southern Algeria to Mali and the Niger, with some 8,000 Malian and 245 refugees from the Niger repatriating.

183. Despite the signing at Bamako on 6 April 1994 of a tripartite agreement for the repatriation of Malian refugees from Mauritania, the situation in northern Mali impeded the organization of a large-scale repatriation operation until mid-1995, when a remarkable spontaneous movement from the refugee camp in Mauritania was noted: some 8,400 refugees repatriated spontaneously between June 1995 and February 1996. In November 1995 a pilot project developed by UNHCR for organized repatriation was implemented, benefiting 2,247 refugees. Consequently, the total assisted population in the camps decreased to 33,300 displaced persons.

184. On 31 January 1996, the Security Council adopted resolution 1042 (1996), extending the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 31 May 1996. As recommended in a UNHCR technical team mission report of February 1995, UNHCR continued to update the 1991 repatriation plan and the draft budget for the repatriation of an estimated 105,000 persons. UNHCR continues its assistance programme of $3.5 million for 80,000 of the most vulnerable refugees among the estimated total of 165,000. Pending confirmation of progress achieved in implementing the United Nations settlement plan, UNHCR will continue with the required preparations that can be undertaken at this stage.

4. Middle East

185. In 1995, 7,349 Iraqi Kurds were assisted by UNHCR to return to their homeland, notably from the Islamic Republic of Iran. The UNHCR project to cover their needs upon arrival includes transportation and livestock/shelter assistance as part of a package aimed at fostering the returnees' economic integration.

186. During 1995, some 16,000 Turkish nationals of Kurdish origin were housed in Atroush camp in northern Iraq. Because of continuing concerns for the security

and safety of the refugees, in late 1995, the residents of Atroush "A" camp were relocated and integrated into Atroush "B" camp. Security concerns continue at Atroush camp. UNHCR provides health, educational and shelter assistance at Atroush, while WFP provides food.

187. In addition, UNHCR continued to carry out its traditional activities in Iraq for persons under its mandate. UNHCR provides assistance as needed to some 38,500 refugees of Iranian origin, most of whom are accommodated in Al-Tash refugee camp and in Misan and Wasit governorates. UNHCR Iraq also provided assistance to 556 refugees of other origins.

188. Resettlement missions from Norway and Finland have recently travelled under UNHCR auspices to Iraq to interview refugees from Al-Tash camp, which hosts 22,500 Iranian refugees of Kurdish origin. Other countries have also expressed their interest in sending similar missions to Iraq. UNHCR provides assistance to persons leaving for resettlement from Iraq via Jordan.

189. There has been no reported progress on the exchange of refugees between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq. However, in anticipation of successful negotiations between the Governments of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the voluntary repatriation of their nationals, which reportedly culminated in the signing of a memorandum of understanding in 1995, UNHCR will continue to liaise with the two parties with a view to ensuring the organized movement of those persons who elect to repatriate.

190. In 1995, the Government of Saudi Arabia continued to extend its assistance to Iraqi refugees in Rafha camp. UNHCR monitored the quantity and quality of assistance, followed up on protection issues, and made démarches to the local authorities as necessary. During 1995, 4,430 persons were resettled in more than 10 countries. A total of 520 persons formally requested their transfer to their country of origin and were repatriated. As of 29 February 1996, the number of Iraqi refugees in Rafha camp stood at 13,080.

191. At the end of February 1996, the refugee population in the Syrian Arab Republic stood at 37,248 refugees, comprising 35,208 Iraqis, 1,031 Somalis, 300 Eritreans, 300 nationals of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 409 nationals of other countries. UNHCR continued to assist 4,048 persons accommodated in El-Hol refugee camp and in Damascus. A total of 506 Iraqi refugees were resettled during 1995, while 23 persons of various origins were assisted to return voluntarily to their countries of origin.

192. As of 29 February 1996, there were 7,816 refugees in Egypt, the majority of whom were Somalis and Sudanese, with an additional group of 186 stateless persons and 16 Bidoons (ex-Kuwait). The Palestinians expelled from the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in late 1995 and stranded at Salloum on the border with Egypt have been assisted by UNHCR. There are currently 179 persons living under difficult conditions in the border area. UNHCR has been liaising closely with all parties concerned to address the situation to determine an appropriate course of action.

193. In the second half of 1995, the Yemeni authorities and UNHCR identified a new camp location in Shukrah, southern Yemen, to replace Al Koud camp, which was destroyed during the civil war in 1994.

194. This camp, once completed, will host a population of some 9,000 Somali refugees consisting of some 4,300 temporarily relocated in Al Gahin camp and another 5,000 who live in Aden suburbs. A local non-governmental organization,

Partners for Development, was contracted in October 1995 to assist UNHCR in the implementation of the care and maintenance project for the Somali refugees.

195. Since early 1995, some 3,000 Somali refugees who remained in Sana'a are assisted with the urban refugees through medical and financial assistance. These services are delivered by UNHCR in coordination with the local non-governmental organization International Cooperation for Development.

196. In view of the volatile situation prevailing in Somalia, only 153 Somalis repatriated. Among the Ethiopian caseload, 65 refugees repatriated in 1995 and 685 are still living in a camp in Taiz in southern Yemen.

CHAPTER IV

FINANCING OF MATERIAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

197. In 1995, the final budget of UNHCR was $1.17 billion. Donors provided some $1.0 billion in both cash and kind, compared to total contributions of $1.06 billion in 1994. The Governments of Japan, the Netherlands, the Nordic countries, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America and the European Commission maintained their excellent funding levels. Donations from both private donors and non-governmental sources continued at levels comparable to 1994.

198. As was the case in 1994, the funding of the 1995 General Programmes remained a top priority. These programmes represent core activities for refugees and provide the High Commissioner with considerable flexibility to deal with emergencies and voluntary repatriations. In 1995, the upward trend in the funding of General Programmes continued. As of 31 December 1995, the Office had received $335 million towards General Programmes as compared with the previous year's figure of $329 million. Secondary income, in the form of the previous year's carry-over, cancellations of prior years' obligations, interest earnings and various transfers allowed UNHCR to carry over nearly $52 million into 1996. This carry-over helped cover expenditure in early 1996, in advance of confirmation by donors of $105 million announced at the Pledging Conference in New York in November 1995.

199. In 1995, special operations again amounted to some two thirds of the Office's operational activities. Appeals were launched, in conjunction with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, for operations in the former Yugoslavia, the Afghan repatriation programme, the Rwanda-Burundi emergency and Liberia, as well as programmes in the Horn of Africa and the republics of the former Soviet Union. UNHCR issued its own appeals for Central America, the Mozambican and Angolan repatriations, the repatriation to Myanmar, the Comprehensive Plan of Action and a number of other operations. The lack of funding for operations in the Great Lakes region was probably the Office's greatest challenge during 1995. The programme was chronically short of finances, hampering operations in the field. During 1995 the Office raised some $662 million for special operations, repatriations and emergencies, in addition to the amounts under General Programmes.

200. UNHCR has entered a sixth consecutive year of exceptional expenditure, the fifth in which expenditure and budgets exceed the $1 billion level. A 1996 General Programmes target of $445.3 million has been set, the largest ever. For Special Programmes, the Office requires some $950 million. Requirements for the Rwanda-Burundi operations, as well as repatriations in Africa and Asia, remain urgent priorities, as do programmes in the former Yugoslavia, the CIS and the Baltic States.

CHAPTER V

RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

A. Cooperation between UNHCR and other members of the United Nations system

1. Review of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

201. Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 calls for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations. Intergovernmental and inter-agency processes have been set in motion in order to follow up the resolution. UNHCR has been actively engaged in both processes.

(a) The intergovernmental process

202. The Standing Committee of the UNHCR Executive Committee decided, at its inter-sessional meeting in January 1996, to review the resolution and the list of indicative issues annexed to it in terms of the three main facets of the High Commissioner's strategy - emergency response, solutions and prevention.

203. At its meeting in January, the Standing Committee looked at aspects of emergency response. It examined the array of financial and operational capacities that UNHCR has developed in order to respond more effectively to emergencies, reviewed inter-agency memoranda of understanding concluded by UNHCR that are of relevance to emergency response and examined issues relating to consolidated appeals, including ways in which the consolidated appeal process could be made more responsive to the programming needs of UNHCR. In April, the focus of the Standing Committee was on the question of solutions. This included a review of the Office's role in the reintegration of refugees returning to their home countries and the need to provide an effective and predictable interface with longer-term development or reconstruction efforts in order to ensure sustainable repatriation solutions. It also looked at the protection role of UNHCR in countries of origin and the linkage between protection and reintegration assistance. At its June meeting, the Standing Committee elected to focus more particularly on the role of UNHCR in prevention, while in September it will address itself to a number of overarching issues, including coordination.

204. Standing Committee discussions will lead to preliminary conclusions to be adopted by the Executive Committee at its annual session in October 1996, covering the range of topics discussed at the inter-sessional meetings of the Standing Committee. These conclusions will provide a basis for further inter-agency and intergovernmental discussions.

(b) The inter-agency process

205. A task force of members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee has been established by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. The task force, which met in December 1995 and February 1996, has identified a number of areas that need attention in order to address gaps and imbalances in the humanitarian response system and has set up a series of working groups to examine each of

them. UNHCR supports this inter-agency process and has been actively participating in the task force and its various working groups.

(c) Bridging the inter-agency and intergovernmental processes

206. To ensure that the inter-agency and intergovernmental processes described above are effectively bridged, the Office has invited the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to brief each meeting of the UNHCR Standing Committee on progress in the inter-agency process and in discussions in other governing bodies. The first such briefing took place in April 1996. The Department has undertaken to ensure, through briefings provided to the governing bodies of other agencies, that key issues raised in discussions of the Standing Committee are brought to the attention of the other boards and vice versa.

2. Participation in other forums

207. UNHCR has participated actively in various other forums, in particular in the context of the work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), where system-wide guidelines have been drawn up for practical work within the continuum from emergency relief to development. The launching of quick impact projects in various operations worldwide has resulted in the signing of country-specific inter-agency agreements. In order to highlight issues and challenges, and to arrive at common solutions, UNHCR staff continued to take part in workshops on the management of field coordination for senior United Nations system representatives.

208. UNHCR has taken part in the newly established ACC task forces on employment and sustainable livelihoods, basic social services for all and an enabling environment for economic and social development. In these task forces, UNHCR wishes to draw attention to the position of refugees, returnees and other persons of concern, and to the issue of social integration in order to prevent social conflict which may lead to refugee outflows.

209. With a view to streamlining inter-agency collaboration, UNHCR in 1995 continued to analyse its formal cooperation with other United Nations agencies, programmes and funds with an emphasis on regional commissions and banks. Memoranda of understanding were signed with UNFPA and UNICEF, aimed at encouraging and facilitating systematic, predictable, cooperative action with these organizations. Local memoranda of understanding were signed with UNDP in Mozambique and Afghanistan on the reintegration of returning refugees and internally displaced persons.

210. UNHCR, in conjunction with other United Nations organizations, has participated in preparatory work for upcoming world conferences and events sponsored by the United Nations and has actively taken part in these events. This work has mainly concentrated on the International Year of Tolerance (1995), the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (1996), the World Summit for Social Development (1995), the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II) (1996) and the World Food Summit (1996).

B. Relations with other international and intergovernmental organizations

211. Apart from the close collaboration with its traditional international and intergovernmental partners, such as the International Organization for Migration, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UNHCR continued to enhance its cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, especially in the Caucasus and other areas of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and with various European Union organs, in particular the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO). In 1995, UNHCR and IOM continued their fruitful collaboration in the execution of mass information campaigns targeting in particular potential migrants from the Russian Federation and other CIS countries. UNHCR cooperated with the African Development Bank in Rwanda and has established a relationship with the Asian Development Bank. During 1995, UNHCR collaborated with intergovernmental organizations on the basis of ad hoc agreements as no formal memoranda were concluded.

C. Relations with non-governmental organizations

212. The Office's main area of activity centred around the follow-up of the UNHCR/NGO Partnership in Action (PARinAC) process with non-governmental organizations both at headquarters and in the field. In order to do so, the Office of the non-governmental organizations Coordinator has benefited from the support of non-governmental organizations focal points established in the divisions and regional bureaux at headquarters. Additionally, PARinAC working groups have been created in the various field offices to discuss and implement priority recommendations.

213. The 1995 pre-Executive Committee meeting with non-governmental organizations included, for the first time, presentations by non-governmental organizations PARinAC regional focal points. Their reports were based on the input of non-governmental organizations from the various regions and centred on experiences of those organizations in the development of the partnership process.

214. The non-governmental organizations Coordinator continued to organize periodic briefings of non-governmental organizations at headquarters. During the reporting period, nine briefings took place - on the Great Lakes region, protection issues, the CIS conference and the former Yugoslavia. The Executive of the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), which is the PARinAC focal point for Europe, met twice with the Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and Senior Protection and External Relations staff during the reporting period, to address issues related to, inter alia, UNHCR/ECRE cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, detention of asylum-seekers, strategy and presence in Western Europe, and cooperation with non-governmental organizations at the country level.

215. UNHCR has included non-governmental organizations input in the finalization of the new programme management handbook for implementing partners (see para. 69). The Division of Programmes and Operational Support, together with non-governmental organizations, has been active in establishing and strengthening assistance standards. Activities in the area of contingency planning, in which non-governmental organizations are essential partners, have continued. The Division of International Protection is in the process of

preparing, also with non-governmental organizations input, a field guide for non-governmental organizations on protection.

216. Two major discussions on overhead costs and private sector fund-raising took place with a wide, representative group of non-governmental organizations. In the latter case, UNHCR clarified the main purpose of its activities as intending to raise awareness of refugee issues. Discussions on the former are ongoing and have included a non-governmental organizations presentation to Executive Committee members (see para. 64).

217. More than 1,500 non-governmental organizations participants benefited from UNHCR training courses throughout the world during the reporting period. Training subjects included protection (voluntary repatriation and resettlement), technical subjects (nutrition, social services and income-generating activities), programme management, people-oriented planning, and training of trainers.

218. Regional PARinAC follow-up meetings for Asia, Central America and West Africa took place in Sri Lanka (May 1995), Costa Rica (December 1995) and Côte d'Ivoire (March 1996). The meetings brought together the UNHCR and non-governmental organizations focal points from countries in each of the regions. The meeting in Asia identified priority recommendations concerning coordination and information exchange for implementation during 1995. The Costa Rica meeting concentrated on activities for 1996 related to protection, capacity-building of local non-governmental organizations and emergency preparedness for 1996, while the meeting in West Africa identified repatriation and reintegration/rehabilitation activities as two main areas of concern, which would require regular information-sharing and follow-up between countries during 1996.

219. The PARinAC process has meant a more systematic coordination with non-governmental organizations and greater cooperation in the response to challenges facing the humanitarian family.

220. The 1995 Nansen medal was awarded to Graça Machel in recognition of her outstanding contributions to humanitarian endeavours, particularly in the field of education, in southern Africa.

Notes

1/ A/AC.96/850.

2/ A/AC.96/860, para. 19.

3/ Ibid., para. 20.

4/ Ibid., para. 19 (i).

5/ A/AC.96/839, para. 24.

6/ A/AC.96/860, para. 22.

7/ EC/46/SC/CRP.16 and 17.

8/ EC/46/SC/CRP.23.

9/ EC/SC.2/78.

10/ A/AC.96/860, para. 21 (a).

11/ A/AC.96/839, para. 32.

Table 1. UNHCR expenditure in 1995 by regional bureau/country and main types of assistance activities

(All sources of funds)

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Regional bureau/country or area	Type of assistance						Total
	Emergency assistance	Care and maintenance	Voluntary repatriation a/	Local settlement	Resettlement	Administrative support	
A. Africa b/							
Angola			5 403.8	197.0		191.9	5 792.7
Benin		2 598.5	1 720.0	31.0	1.0	191.6	4 542.1
Burundi		20 765.5	2 829.5	137.6	12.7	337.8	24 083.2
Central African Republic		3 312.8	827.2	251.9	0.3	70.3	4 462.5
Côte d'Ivoire	51.1	8 919.4	84.3	3 202.8	5.2	404.0	12 666.8
Djibouti		2 055.0	1 729.4		19.9	246.7	4 051.0
Eritrea		1 096.2	8 566.0			186.7	9 848.9
Ethiopia		9 293.0	5 253.0	3 948.8	249.8	963.2	19 707.8
Ghana		2 580.8	22.8	79.7	2.5	243.4	2 929.2
Guinea	3 200.3	17 186.8	836.8	7.9		252.9	21 484.7
Kenya		23 835.2	5 767.9	973.2	568.0	2 168.3	33 312.6
Liberia		1 945.1	1 473.9	57.8		362.4	3 839.2
Malawi		4 900.2	1 005.6	0.7	1.7	177.5	6 085.7
Mozambique		220.0	39 991.8	4.0		1 268.6	41 484.4
Rwanda		7 485.6	27 754.7		0.8	416.0	35 657.1
Senegal		1 774.1		1 709.6	1.7	538.0	4 023.4
Sierra Leone		927.8	302.6	46.9		50.3	1 327.6
Somalia		171.9	3 290.9				3 462.8
Sudan		4 685.6	2 809.3	7 018.4	141.5	1 105.8	15 760.6
Uganda	2 222.9	4 555.8	12.3	16 100.7	0.6	555.0	23 447.3
United Republic of Tanzania	254.2	56 516.5	287.8	982.0	0.3	509.5	58 550.3
Zaire	4 103.8	93 192.7	436.5	2 805.8	40.9	384.3	100 964.0
Zambia		1 083.4	343.4	1 338.3	2.9	328.4	3 096.4

Regional bureau/country or area	Type of assistance						
	Emergency assistance	Care and maintenance	Voluntary repatriation a/	Local settlement	Resettlement	Administrative support	Total
Zimbabwe		1 296.1	2 010.1	26.1		133.6	3 465.9
Southern Africa		2 507.3	2 800.0	785.6	1.3	619.4	6 713.6
West Africa		6 639.2	2 660.2	1 614.1	17.4	233.8	11 164.7
Other countries in Africa	2 000.0	18 948.2	617.8	1 048.6	6.2	78.1	20 698.7
Subtotal (1)	11 832.3	296 492.7	118 837.5	42 368.5	1 074.7	12 017.5	482 623.2
2. Asia and Oceania							
Bangladesh		5 927.9	1 713.8	11.6	3.1	387.3	8 043.7
China		286.0	12.5	2 393.6	2.9	204.9	2 899.9
Hong Kong		11 208.8	1 526.8		268.8	477.9	13 482.3
Nepal		6 176.1		439.5		258.1	6 873.7
Philippines		1 183.1	1 218.8		1 473.0	124.5	3 999.4
Thailand		8 620.6	824.6	66.6	358.6	647.4	10 517.8
Viet Nam		1 650.5	485.7	6 330.0	4.0	186.3	8 656.5
Other countries in Asia		11 396.9	22 572.6	4 065.6	456.8	1 779.1	40 271.0
Australia and New Zealand		877.1	59.8	38.2		87.8	1 062.7
Subtotal (2)	0.0	47 327.0	28 414.4	13 345.1	2 567.2	4 153.3	95 807.0
3. Europe							
Armenia		5 864.7				176.9	6 041.6
Austria		482.2	1.5	1 077.8	3.2	184.4	1 729.1
Azerbaijan	1 389.9	6.6		4 175.0		256.9	5 808.4
France			98.6	2 138.2		111.7	2 348.5
Georgia	1 244.7	3 321.4	366.0			312.2	5 444.3
Germany		123.8		2 774.0		109.2	3 007.0
Greece		2 015.8	4.8		8.9	119.1	2 148.6
Hungary		2 289.2	1.0	257.4		95.8	2 643.4
Italy		2 486.8		1 813.6	9.9	359.0	4 669.3
Russian Federation	10 435.8	6 839.7	88.3	52.1	6.3	406.5	17 828.7

Regional bureau/country or area	Type of assistance						
	Emergency assistance	Care and maintenance	Voluntary repatriation a/	Local settlement	Resettlement	Administrative support	Total
Spain			3.5	949.3		179.5	1 132.3
Turkey		4 044.5	4.7	0.8	518.7	363.2	4 931.9
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland			96.6	1 759.3		127.4	1 983.3
Former Yugoslavia		215 234.4	1 969.0	136.8	425.0	3 796.1	221 581.3
Central countries		3 411.0	5.1	755.7	1.4	311.0	4 484.2
CIS countries		636.1	12.4		4.0	53.9	706.4
Northern and Baltic countries		265.0		1 025.3	1.6	83.3	1 375.2
Western countries		620.0	3.1	3 085.8	2.9	319.1	4 030.9
Subtotal (3)	13 050.4	247 621.2	2 854.6	20 001.1	981.9	7 365.2	291 874.4
4. Americas							
Canada			13.5	1 077.7		70.1	1 161.3
Guatemala			5 234.4	1 663.7	0.1	551.6	7 449.8
Mexico		1 498.8	1 862.6	5 289.5	0.1	640.8	9 291.8
United States of America	35.8		17.9	2 485.1		180.5	2 719.3
Northern South American countries	247.9	1 668.9	292.7	664.4	28.7	388.0	3 290.6
Central American countries		274.5	412.9	4 026.5	0.2	377.5	5 091.8
Southern South American countries		2 819.8	146.0	2 464.2	6.4	432.9	5 869.3
Subtotal (4)	283.7	6 262.0	7 980.0	17 671.1	35.5	2 641.4	34 873.7
5. South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East							
Afghanistan		1 215.0	9 628.5			241.6	11 085.1
Algeria		5 749.6	471.2		0.6	45.9	6 267.3
Cyprus		6 036.3			3.8	117.4	6 157.5
Egypt		1 920.2	1.0	1 154.3	29.5	206.0	3 311.0
Iran (Islamic Republic of)		982.0	6 995.3	12 674.8	19.2	469.5	21 140.8

Regional bureau/country or area	Type of assistance						
	Emergency assistance	Care and maintenance	Voluntary repatriation a/	Local settlement	Resettlement	Administrative support	Total
Iraq		3 336.7	884.0		1 507.1	321.9	6 049.7
Mauritania		5 798.2	559.5		0.7	224.7	6 581.1
Pakistan		15 253.6	3 097.0	27.3	2.0	886.3	19 266.2
Yemen		3 389.6	260.0	1 269.3	10.0	100.7	5 029.6
Central Asian republics	3 561.0	72.7	7.1	5 800.0		444.8	9 885.6
Other countries in North Africa		1 427.5	2 872.7	52.4		66.7	4 419.3
Other countries in Western Africa		5 462.2	96.1	723.5	244.0	271.0	6 796.8
Subtotal (5)	3 561.0	50 643.6	24 872.4	21 701.6	1 816.9	3 394.5	105 990.0
6. Other programmes and headquarters							
Global and regional projects	12 533.5	47 895.6	8 920.2	11 354.4	725.4	50 343.5	131 772.6
Total (1-6)	41 260.9	696 242.1	191 879.1	126 441.8	7 201.6	79 915.4	1 142 940.9
of which: General Programmes	15 964.0	241 810.3	20 140.4	86 096.2	6 402.6	34 644.8	405 058.3
Special Programmes	25 296.9	454 431.8	171 738.7	40 345.6	799.0	45 270.6 c/	737 882.6
United Nations regular budget						27 936.7	27 936.7

a/ Including assistance to returnees in countries of origin.

b/ Excluding North Africa, which is included in 5. South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East.

c/ Including expenditure for the Fund for International Field Staff Housing and basic amenities.

Table 2. Contributions to UNHCR assistance programmes

(As at 29 March 1996)

(In United States dollars)

1995			Donor	1996		
General programmes	Special programmes	Total		Total	General programmes	Special programmes
			A. Governments			
50 000		50 000	Algeria			
49 985		49 985	Argentina	50 000	50 000	
6 021 748	5 828 013	11 849 761	Australia	11 430 868	10 150 376	1 280 492
470 000	533 605	1 003 605	Austria	445 545	445 545	
1 446 833	2 365 169	3 812 002	Belgium	3 423 500	1 693 072	1 730 428
	5 000	5 000	Bhutan			
11 749 923	3 845 668	15 595 591	Canada	2 698 358	835 645	1 862 713
20 000		20 000	Chile			
250 000		250 000	China	250 000	250 000	
18 995		18 995	Colombia			
6 299	1 000	7 299	Cyprus			
19 060 891	25 963 116	45 024 007	Denmark	19 543 345	18 018 018	1 525 327
			Djibouti	1 000	1 000	
			Egypt	5 934	5 934	
6 874 634	5 468 982	12 343 616	Finland	1 333 333		1 333 333
2 845 579	5 074 906	7 920 485	France			
6 414 023	10 801 757	17 215 780	Germany	14 306 770	6 293 706	8 013 064
5 000		5 000	Ghana			
300 000	30 000	330 000	Greece	300 000	300 000	
10 000		10 000	Holy See	10 000	10 000	
20 000		20 000	Hungary	20 000	20 000	

1995			Donor	1996		
General programmes	Special programmes	Total		Total	General programmes	Special programmes
77 882	46 000	123 882	Iceland	68 913	68 913	
4 000	24 984	28 984	Indonesia	4 000	4 000	
1 637 395	1 173 845	2 811 240	Ireland	999 435		999 435
40 116		40 116	Israel			
7 459 512	6 234 724	13 694 236	Italy	503 145		503 145
25 705 250	95 009 559	120 714 809	Japan	29 282 090		29 282 090
6 000		6 000	Lao People's Democratic Republic			
43 103		43 103	Liechtenstein	51 367	43 103	8 264
261 911	742 049	1 003 960	Luxembourg	101 695	101 695	
20 000	150 000	170 000	Malaysia			
2 008		2 008	Malta			
50 000	50 000	100 000	Mexico			
8 230		8 230	Monaco	7 986	7 986	
			Morocco	15 000	15 000	
	500	500	Namibia			
32 484 841	42 064 535	74 549 376	Netherlands	35 703 198	28 571 429	7 131 769
402 300	65 050	467 350	New Zealand	672 300	672 300	
49 945		49 945	Nigeria			
20 364 646	26 750 334	47 114 980	Norway	25 235 940	23 734 177	1 501 763
4 000		4 000	Oman			
4 623		4 623	Pakistan			
500		500	Panama			
1 000	1 158	2 158	Philippines	1 000	1 000	
150 000		150 000	Portugal			
300 000	200 000	500 000	Republic of Korea	700 000	700 000	

1995			Donor	1996		
General programmes	Special programmes	Total		Total	General programmes	Special programmes
	12 579	12 579	San Marino			
45 333	500 000	545 333	Saudi Arabia			
16 649		16 649	Slovakia			
2 371 849	3 290 484	5 662 333	Spain	1 794 272	70 203	1 724 069
5 000		5 000	Sri Lanka	5 000	5 000	
2 500		2 500	Sudan			
36 262 610	30 316 130	66 578 740	Sweden	2 597 791		2 597 791
10 309 604	14 264 412	24 574 016	Switzerland	12 859 790	11 206 897	1 652 893
15 000	49 800	64 800	Thailand			
3 787		3 787	Trinidad and Tobago			
5 330		5 330	Tunisia	5 330	5 330	
75 000	50 000	125 000	Turkey	150 000	150 000	
26 795 238	24 021 976	50 817 214	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	11 977 350	7 692 308	4 285 042
96 675 000	130 040 806	226 715 806	United States of America	50 700 000	200 000	50 500 000
24 353		24 353	Venezuela			
1 500		1 500	Viet Nam			
317 299 925	434 976 141	752 276 066	Total	227 254 255	111 322 637	115 931 618
			B. European Commission			
15 288 250	217 734 046	233 022 296	European Commission	1 151 849	518 135	633 714

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1995			Donor	1996		
General programmes	Special programmes	Total		Total	General programmes	Special programmes
			C. Intergovernmental organizations			
	3 151 321	3 151 321	African Development Bank			
	50 000	50 000	Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations			
	3 201 321	3 201 321	Total			
			D. United Nations system			
107 900	565 064	672 964	Total			
			E. Regional/autonomous authorities, non-governmental organizations and other donors			
2 535 585	13 110 773	15 646 358	Total	830 199	76 521	753 678
335 231 660	669 587 345	1 004 819 005	Grand total	229 236 303	111 917 293	117 319 010